THE ADVENTURES OF
GUMDROP

Val Biro

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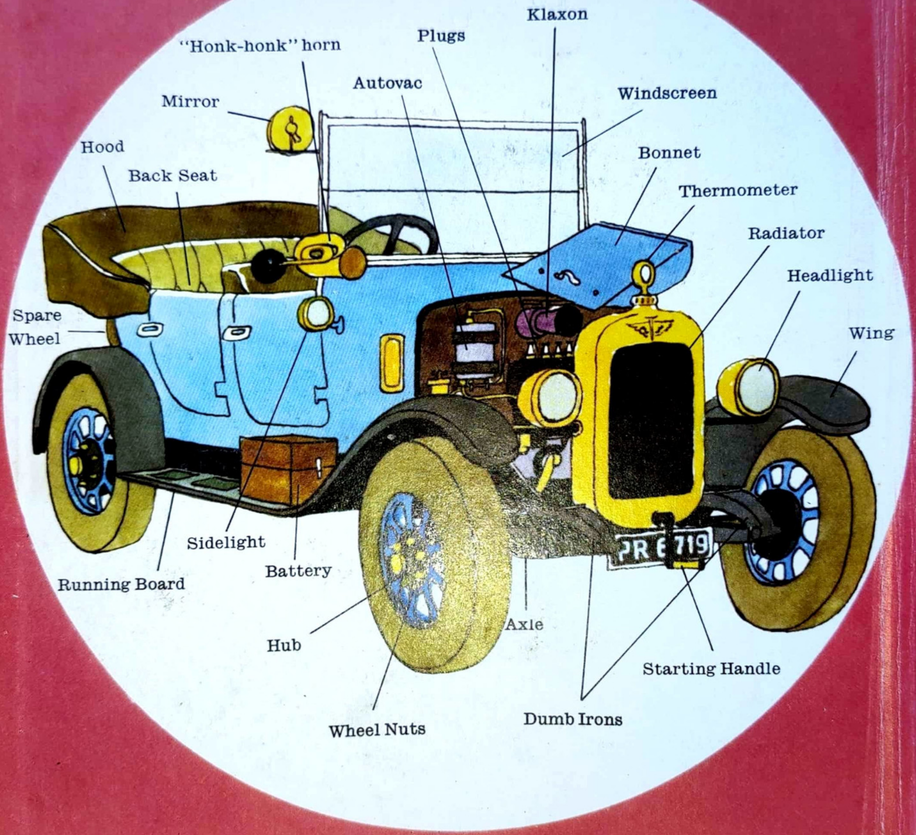
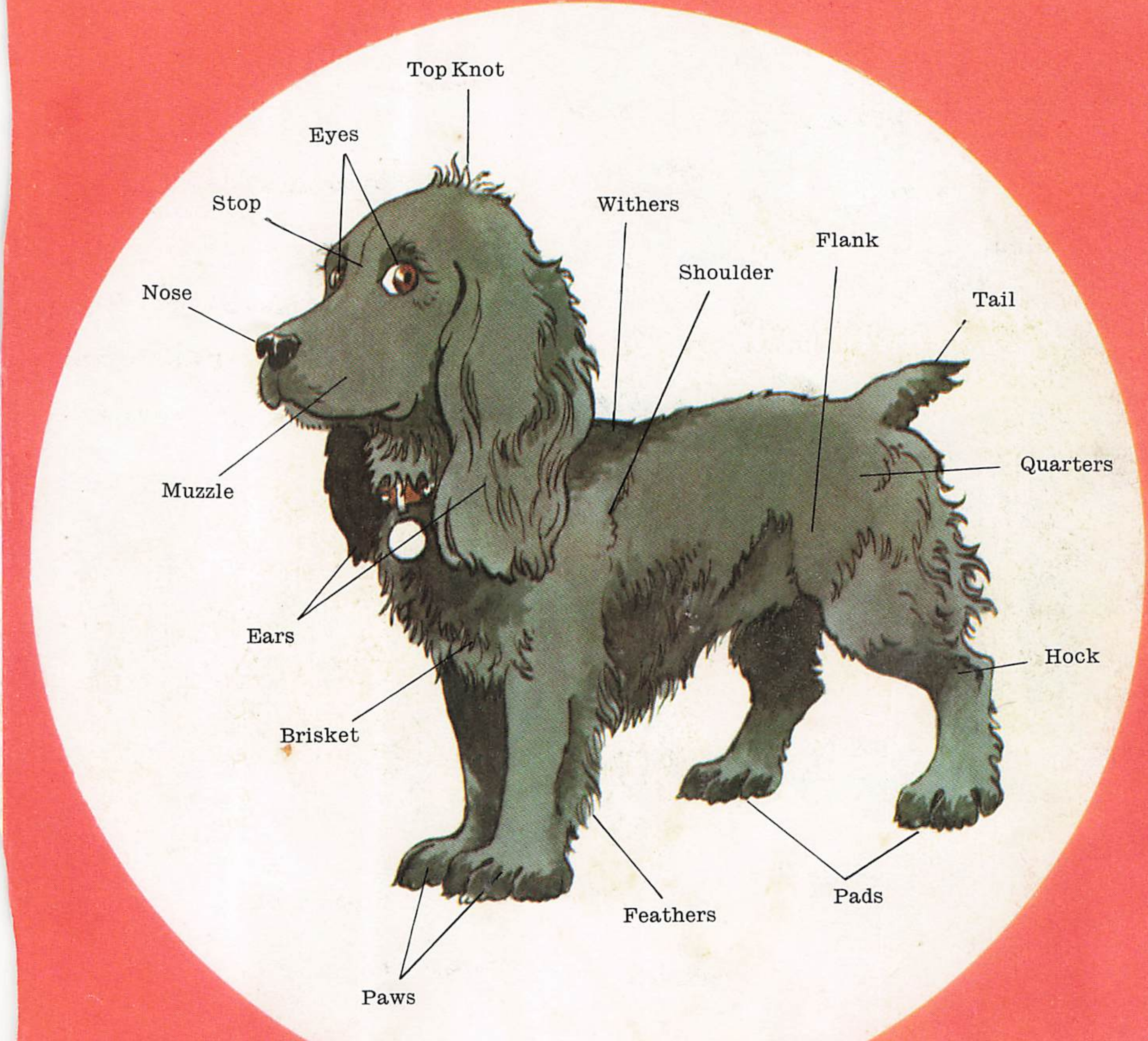
SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TWO


Klaxon
Plugs
"Honk-honk" horn
Autovac
Windscreen
Mirror
Hood
Bonnet
Back Seat
Thermometer
Radiator
Headlight
Spare Wheel
Wing
PR 6719
Sidelight
Battery
Running Board
Axle
Hub
Starting Handle
Dumb Irons
Wheel Nuts

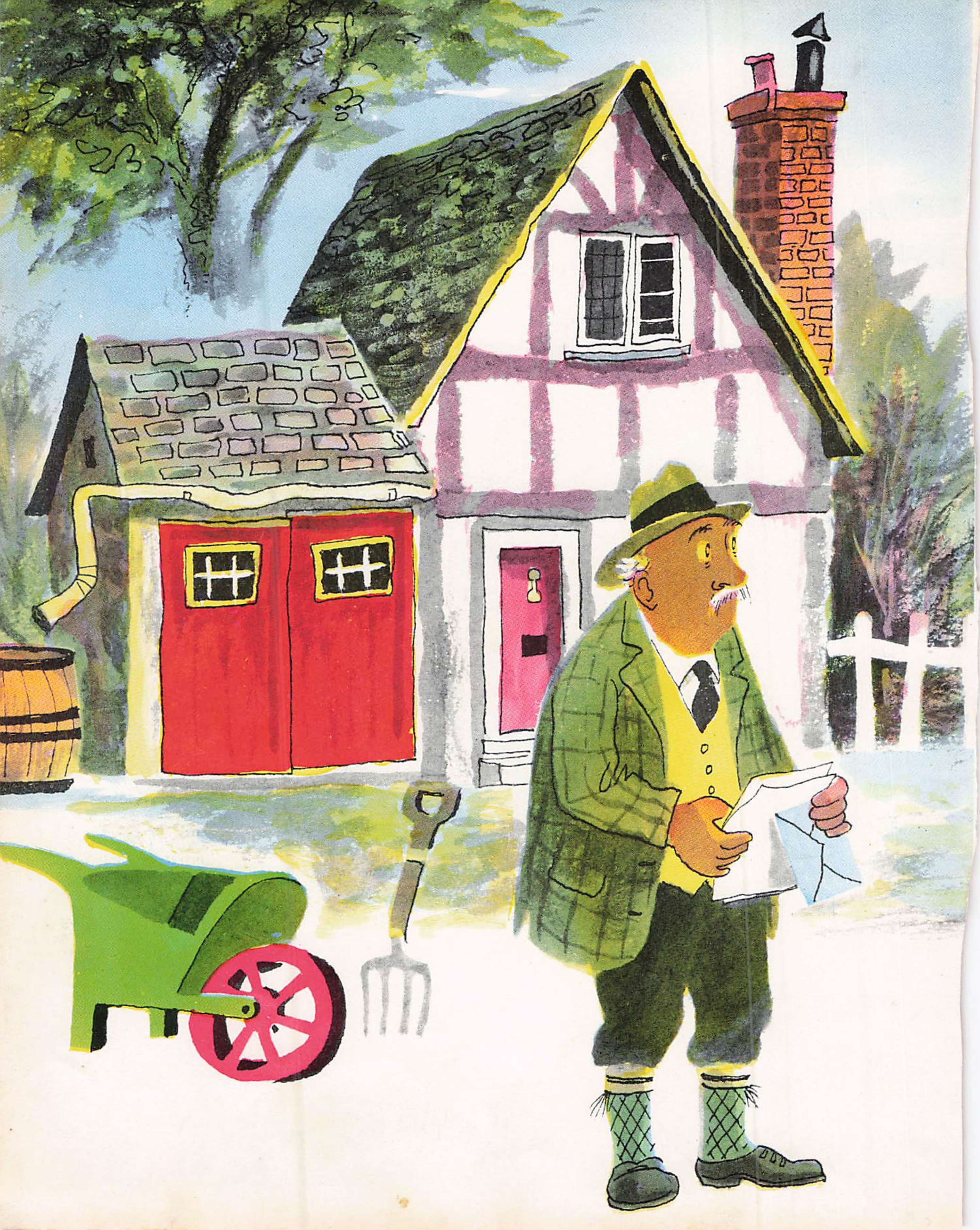
This is GUMDROP. He is an Austin Clifton Heavy Twelve-Four, made in 1926. He is 13ft. 6ins. long and weighs one ton and 112 pounds.

PRINCIPALS IN THIS BOOK

Ellis


Top Knot
Eyes
Stop
Withers
Flank
Shoulder
Nose
Tail
Quarters
Muzzle
Ears
Hock
Brisket
Feathers
Pads
Paws

This is **HORACE**. He is a cocker spaniel and is two years old. He is 2ft. 7ins. long and weighs 35 pounds.

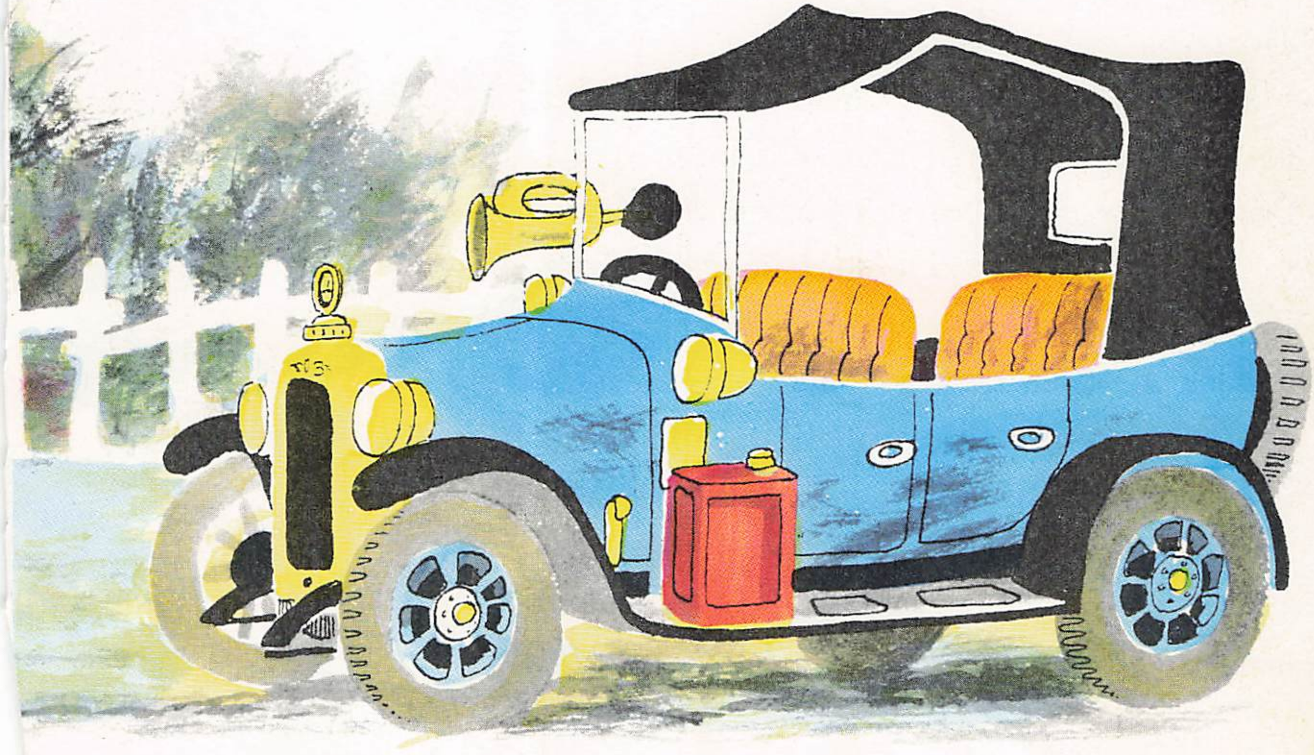


Sara & Jimmy 1985

GUMDROP

THE ADVENTURES OF A VINTAGE CAR

Story and pictures by Val Biro



HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON SYDNEY AUCKLAND TORONTO

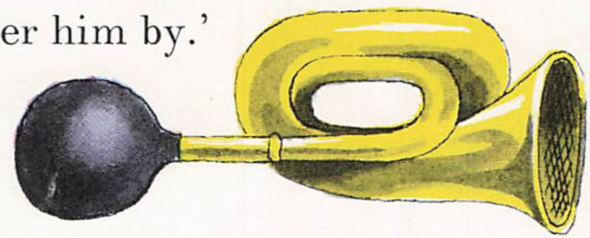
THERE WAS ONCE A CAR CALLED GUMDROP. He was a very old car, and his proper name was Austin Clifton Twelve-Four. But everybody called him Gumdrop. He belonged to Mr Oldcastle, who kept him polished and greased and oiled, and used to drive him proudly round the countryside.

Mr Oldcastle was rather lonely. One day his daughter invited him to come and live with her in the town. But she had no room for Gumdrop in her garage.

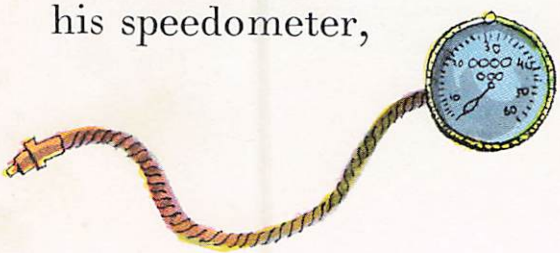
'I shall have to sell Gumdrop,' thought Mr Oldcastle sadly. 'However, I will take off his splendid brass horn and keep it to remember him by.'

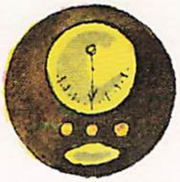
And this is exactly what he did.

So Gumdrop was sold to Mr Pluggett's Garage.

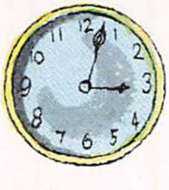


'An old crock like this isn't much use to anyone,' said Mr Pluggett. 'But someone might want his instruments – his speedometer,





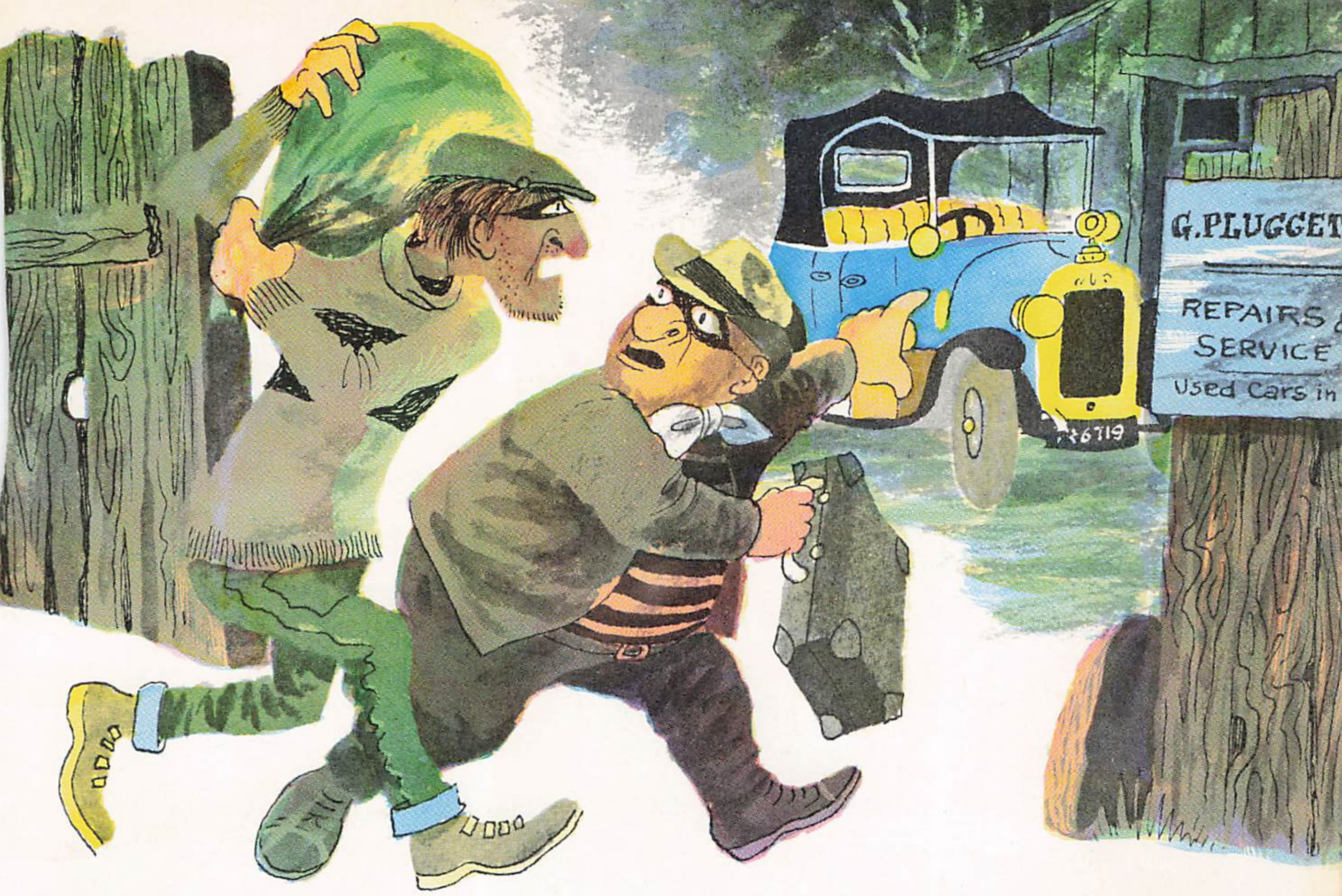
his ammeter



and his clock.

I'll take them out and try and sell them separately.'

And this is exactly what he did.



Gumdrop was left out in Mr Pluggett's yard. It was a sad change from Mr Oldcastle's warm garage with the red door. Nobody came to look at him. Nobody wanted to buy him.

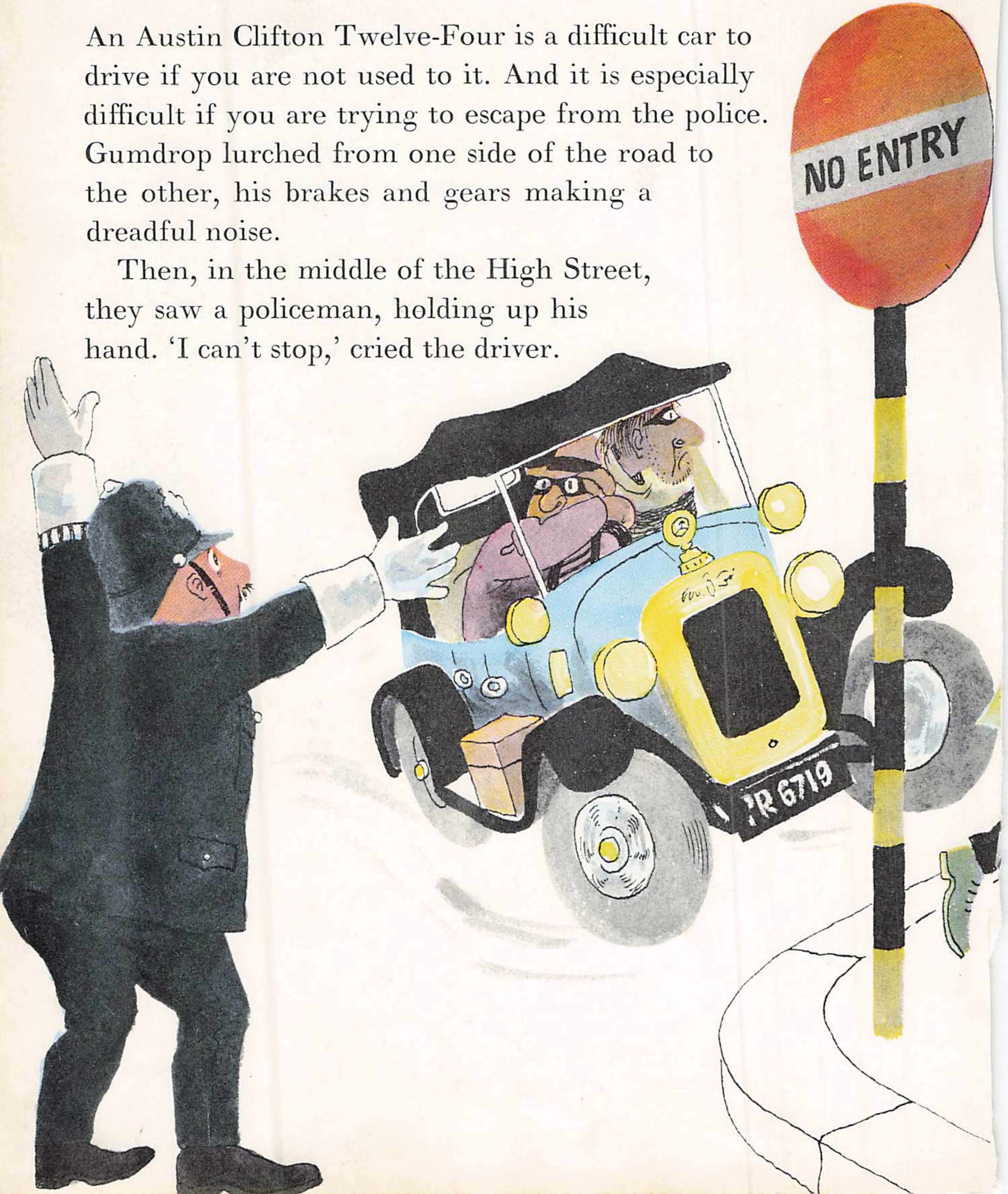
One day two men ran breathlessly into the yard. They were burglars, escaping from the police.

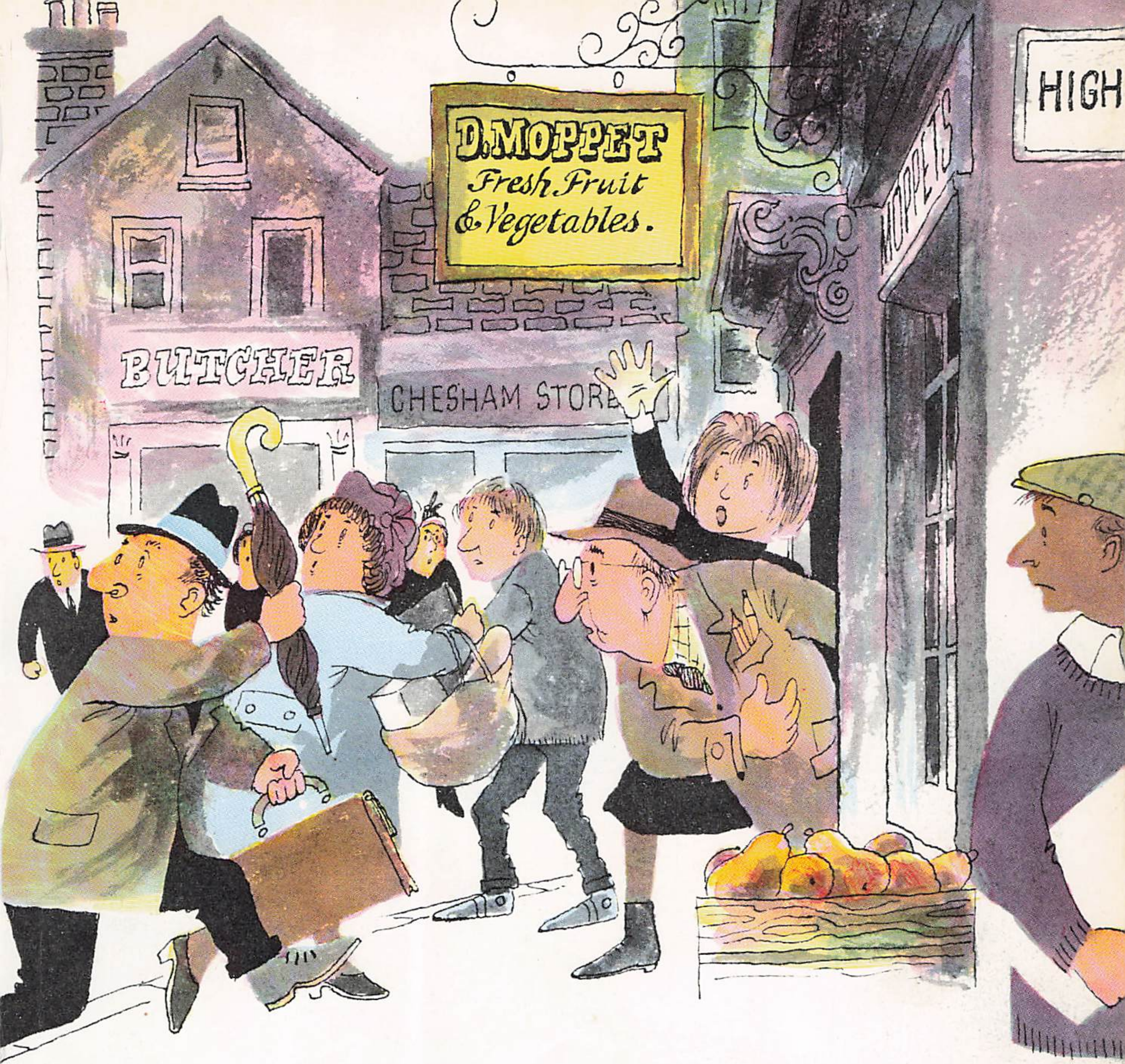
'This car will do for our get-away,' said one of them. 'No one will miss an old crock like this.'

So they jumped into Gumdrop, started up the engine, and drove out of the garage yard and down the road.

An Austin Clifton Twelve-Four is a difficult car to drive if you are not used to it. And it is especially difficult if you are trying to escape from the police. Gumdrop lurched from one side of the road to the other, his brakes and gears making a dreadful noise.

Then, in the middle of the High Street, they saw a policeman, holding up his hand. 'I can't stop,' cried the driver.




D. MOPPET
Fresh Fruit
& Vegetables.
HIGH
MOPPETS
BUTCHER
CHESHAM STORE

With a sharp squeal (the brakes), a big cr-r-runch (the wings), a loud bang (the front tyres), a gurgling hiss (the radiator), and a dull clang (the headlamps), Gumdrop went straight into the window of Mr Moppet the greengrocer.

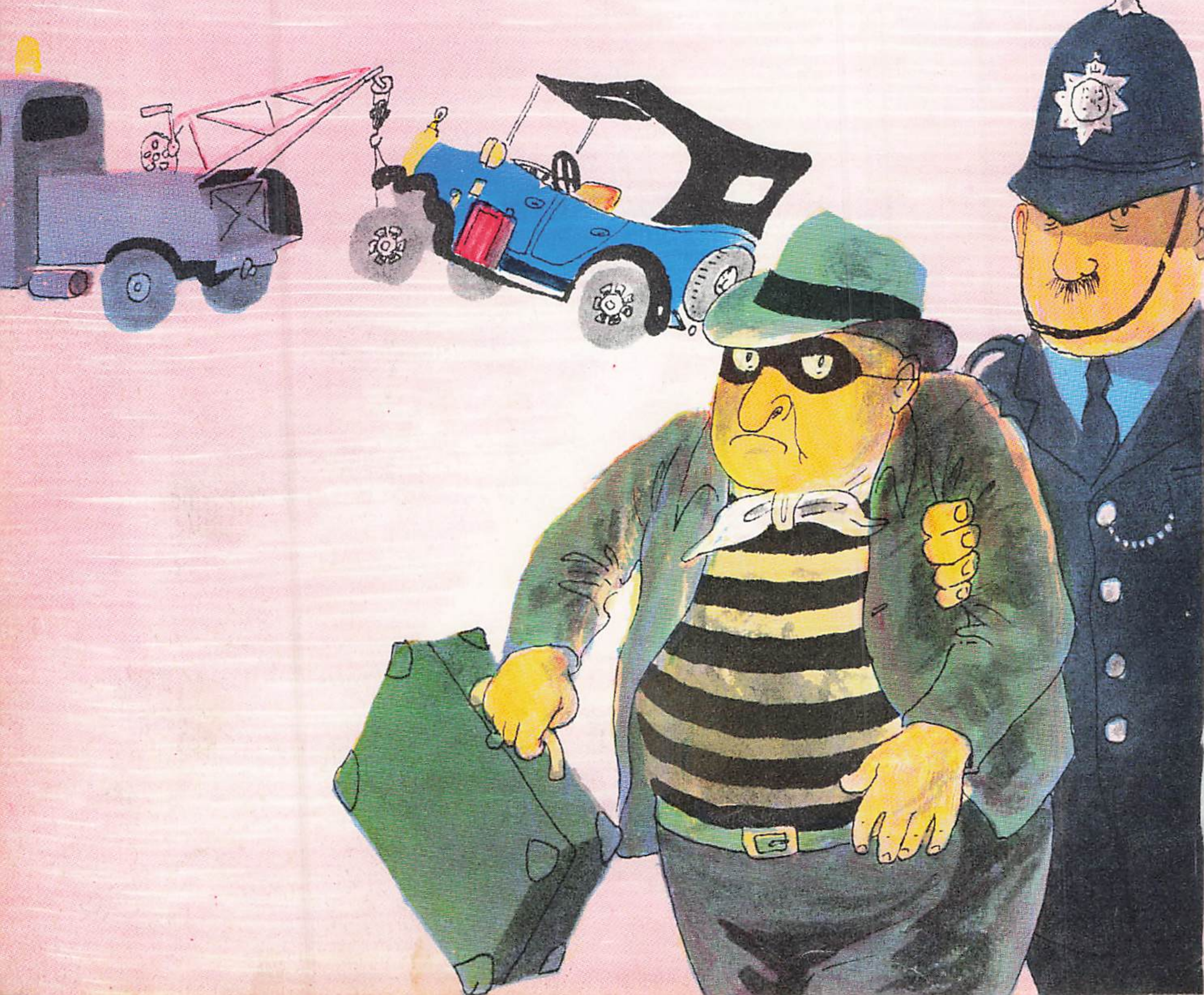
The policeman marched up and arrested the dazed burglars.

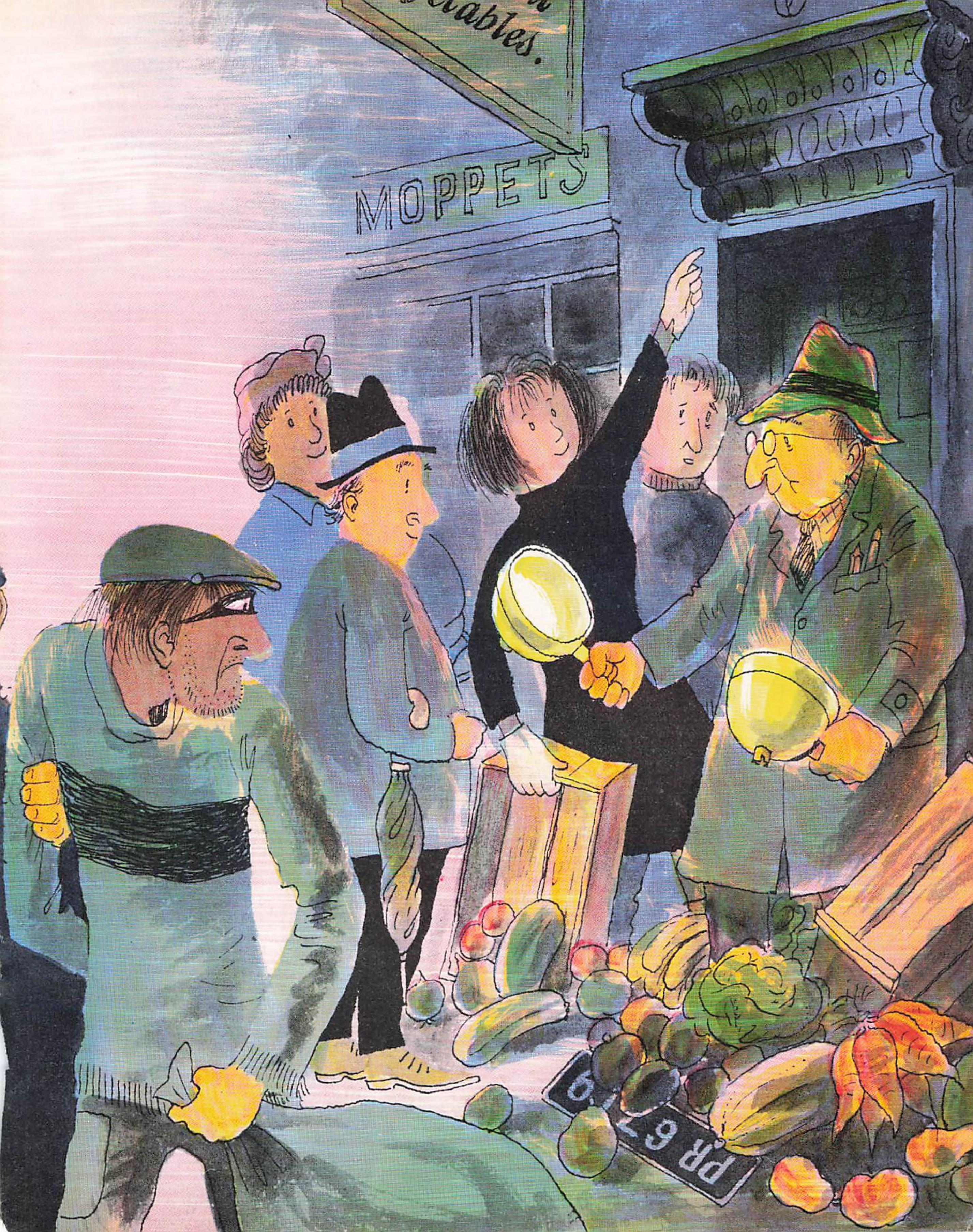
A lorry came to tow Gumdrop to the police-station.

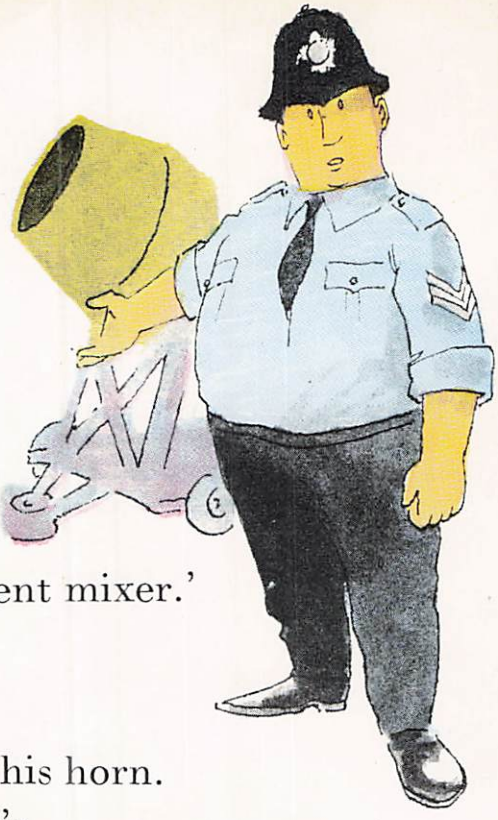
Mr Moppet began to tidy his shop. Under the pile of vegetables on the pavement he was surprised to find two brass headlamps.

'These will look nice if I hang them up outside my shop,' said Mr Moppet.

And this is exactly what he did.




etables.
MOPPETS
6
PR 6



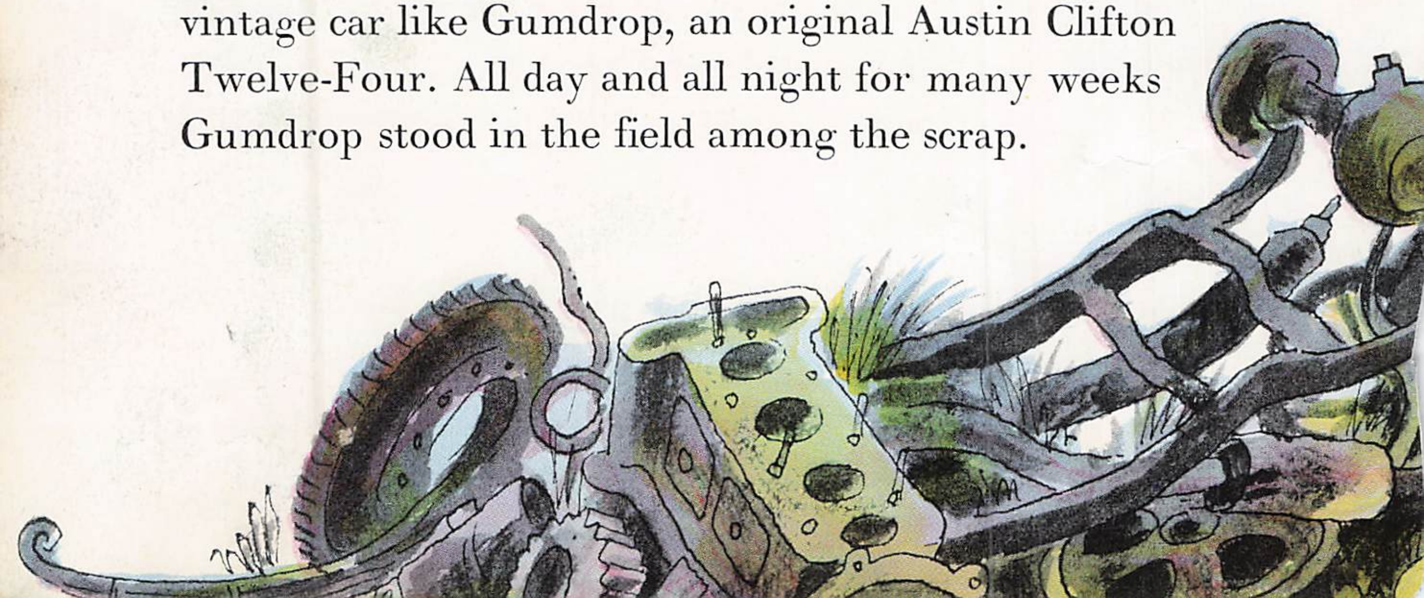
The police sergeant was a kind man. He knew a good Austin Clifton Twelve-Four when he saw one.

'But we can't keep you here,' he said. 'The superintendent doesn't believe in old cars. However, we'd like to take out your engine and battery and use them to drive our cement mixer.'

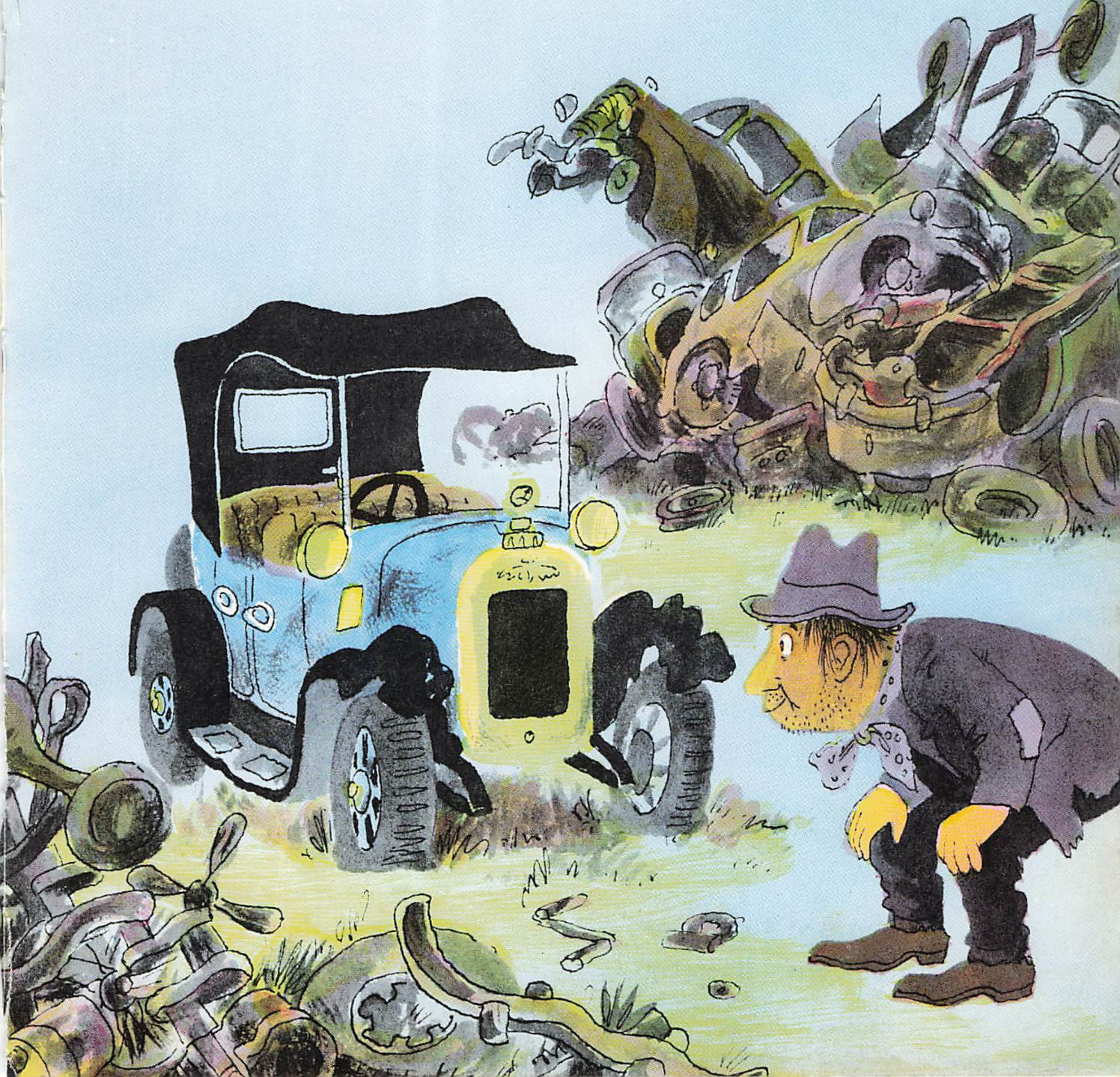
And this is exactly what they did.

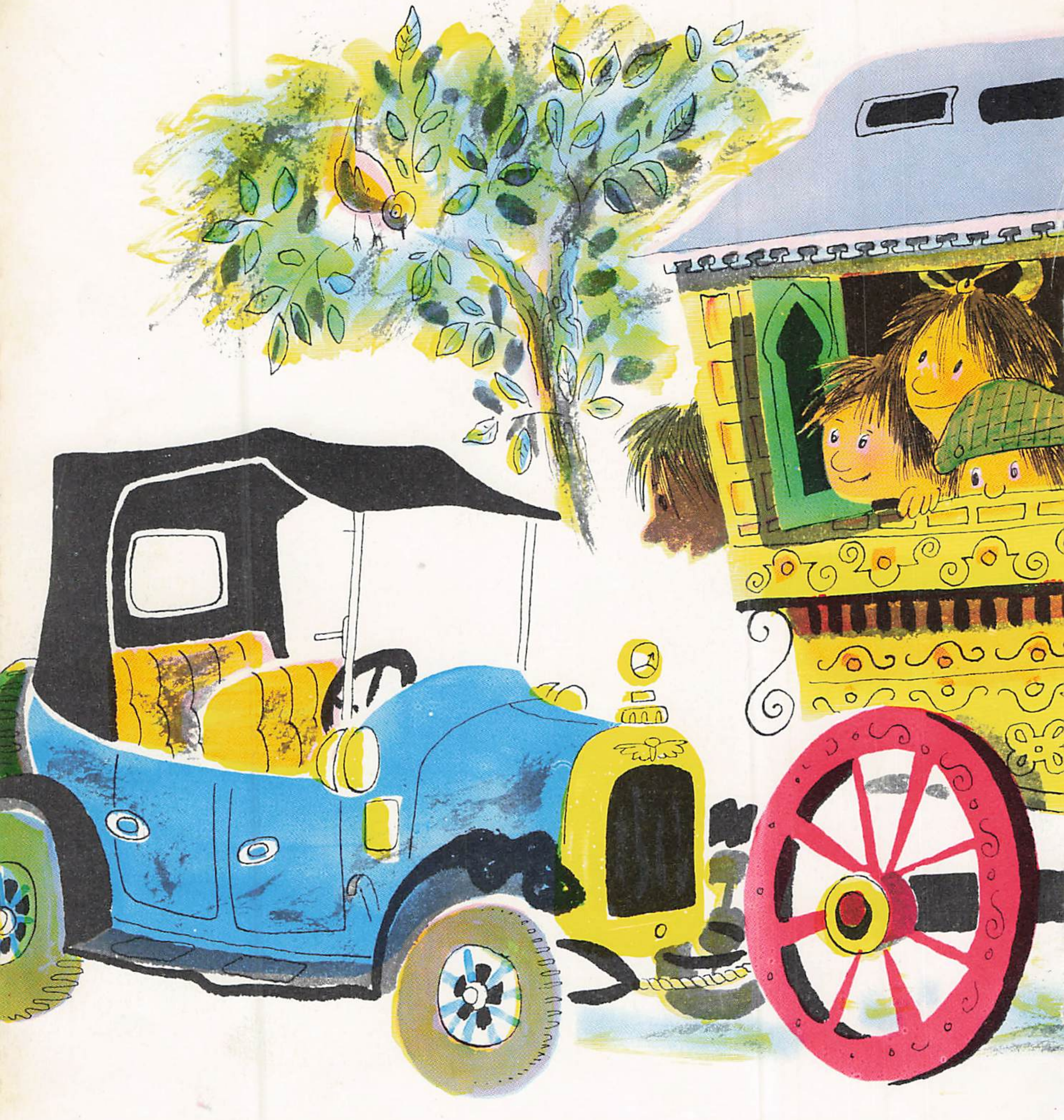
Poor Gumdrop! Mr Oldcastle had kept his horn.
He had lost his instruments at Pluggett's,
his headlamps at Moppet's,
and now his engine and battery had been taken out too.

That afternoon the lorry came and towed him away to a yard with a field behind it, littered with old, worn-out cars, wheels, engines, and scrap of every description. This was the final indignity for a rare vintage car like Gumdrop, an original Austin Clifton Twelve-Four. All day and all night for many weeks Gumdrop stood in the field among the scrap.

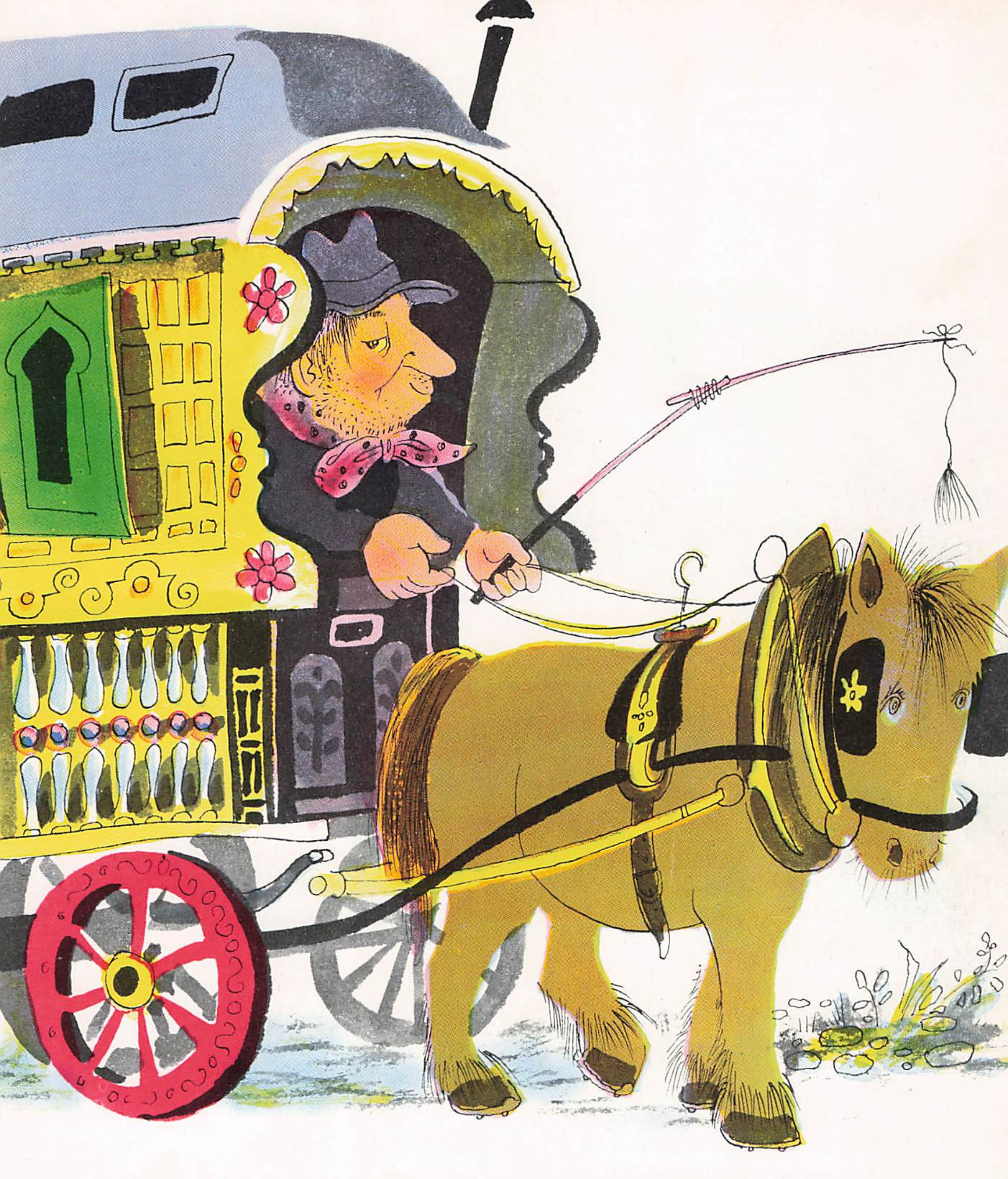


One day a gipsy man saw Gumdrop in the field. He examined his wheels and his seat and his hood. 'This is just what I want to tow behind my caravan and carry all my extra gear,' said Mr Zachariah Rosa.

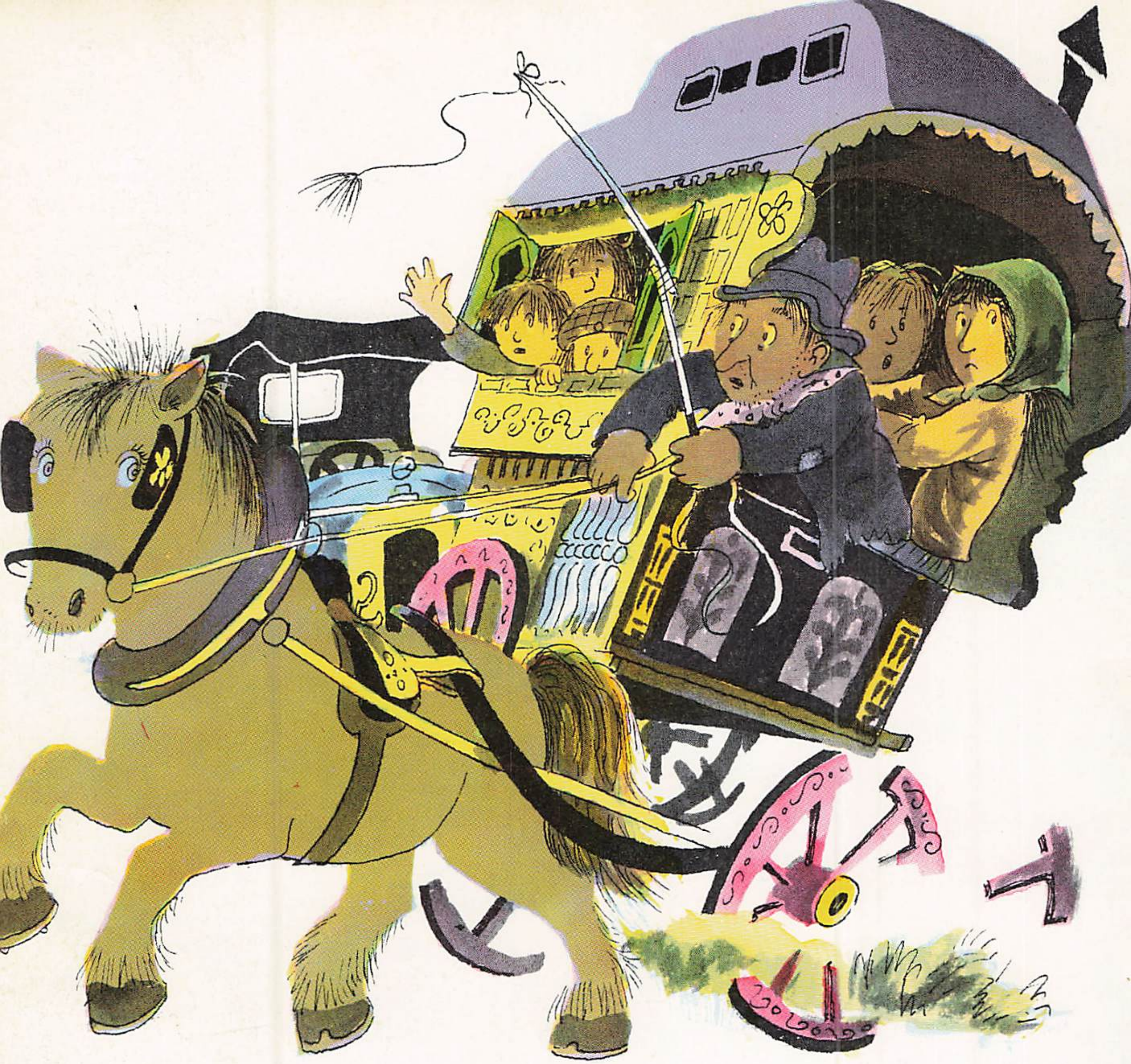




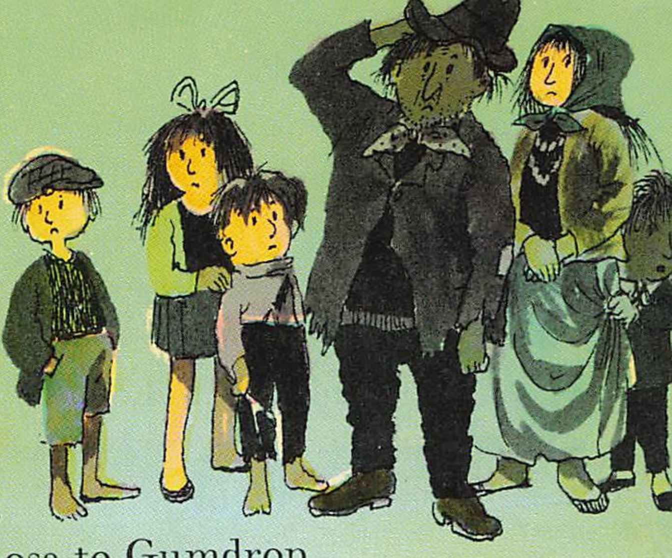
So Mr Zachariah Rosa the gipsy bought
the now battered Gumdrop for two pounds.



He mended his front tyres, and towed him along behind his caravan.



One day, as Mr Rosa's horse Cherry pulled the caravan (with Gumdrop behind), a motor-cycle whizzed past with a bang-bang, just missing them. Cherry took fright and bolted. The caravan lurched, and fell into a ditch, breaking its wheels.

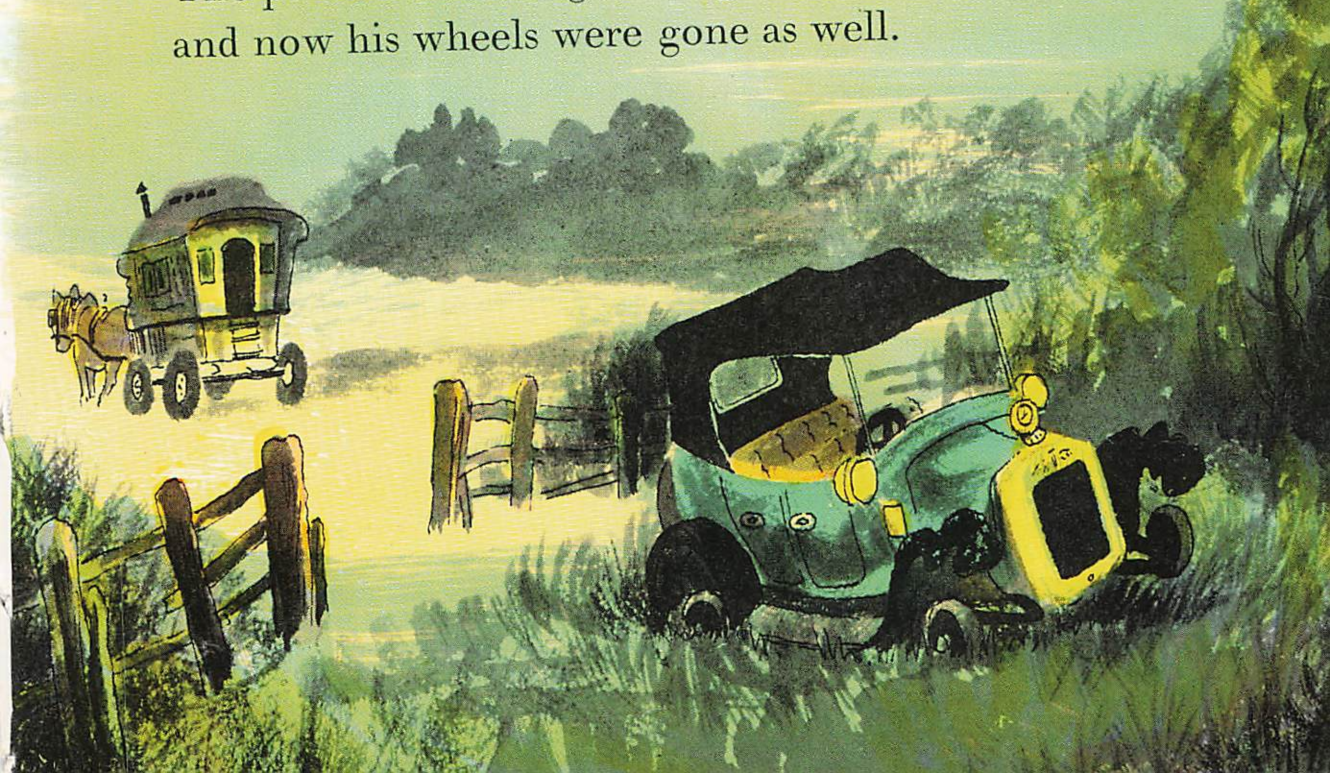


Mr Rosa and his wife and children got out and stood disconsolately in the road, wondering what to do.

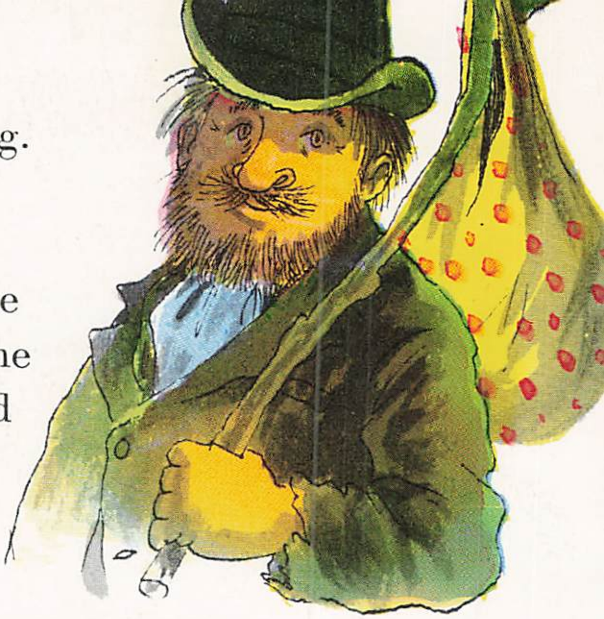
'We'll have to take off your wheels and put them on the caravan,' said Mr Rosa to Gumdrop.

And this is exactly what they did. Since they could no longer tow Gumdrop without wheels, they left him by himself in a field.

So Gumdrop was all alone again. Mr Oldcastle had kept his horn. He had lost his instruments at Pluggett's and his headlamps at Moppet's. The police were using his engine and his battery, and now his wheels were gone as well.



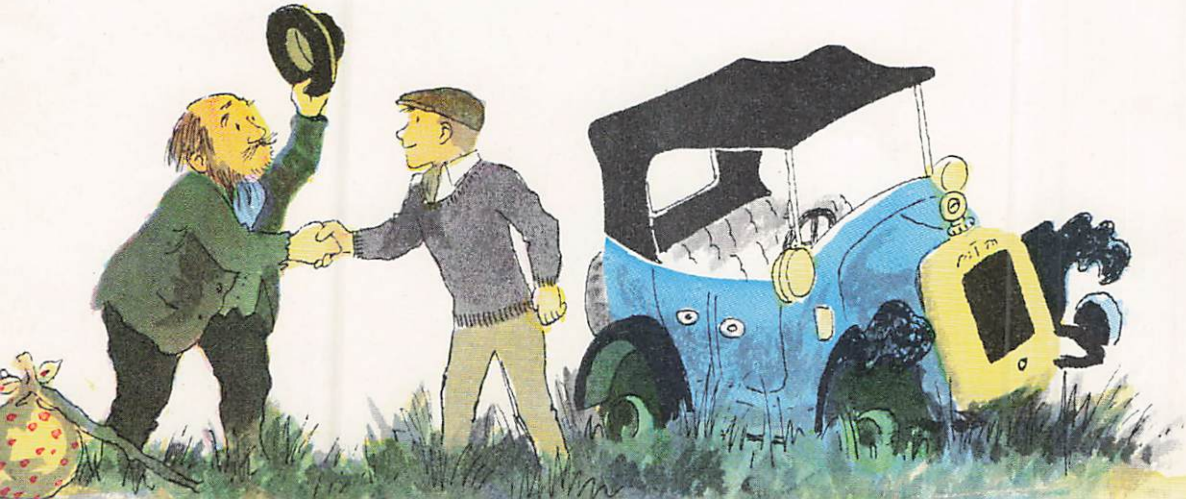
However, he was not alone for long. Mr Alfred Blops, who walked the countryside as a tramp, thought that Gumdrop would make an excellent temporary home. So he brushed Gumdrop's upholstery and kept his inside clean, and there he used to sleep at night.

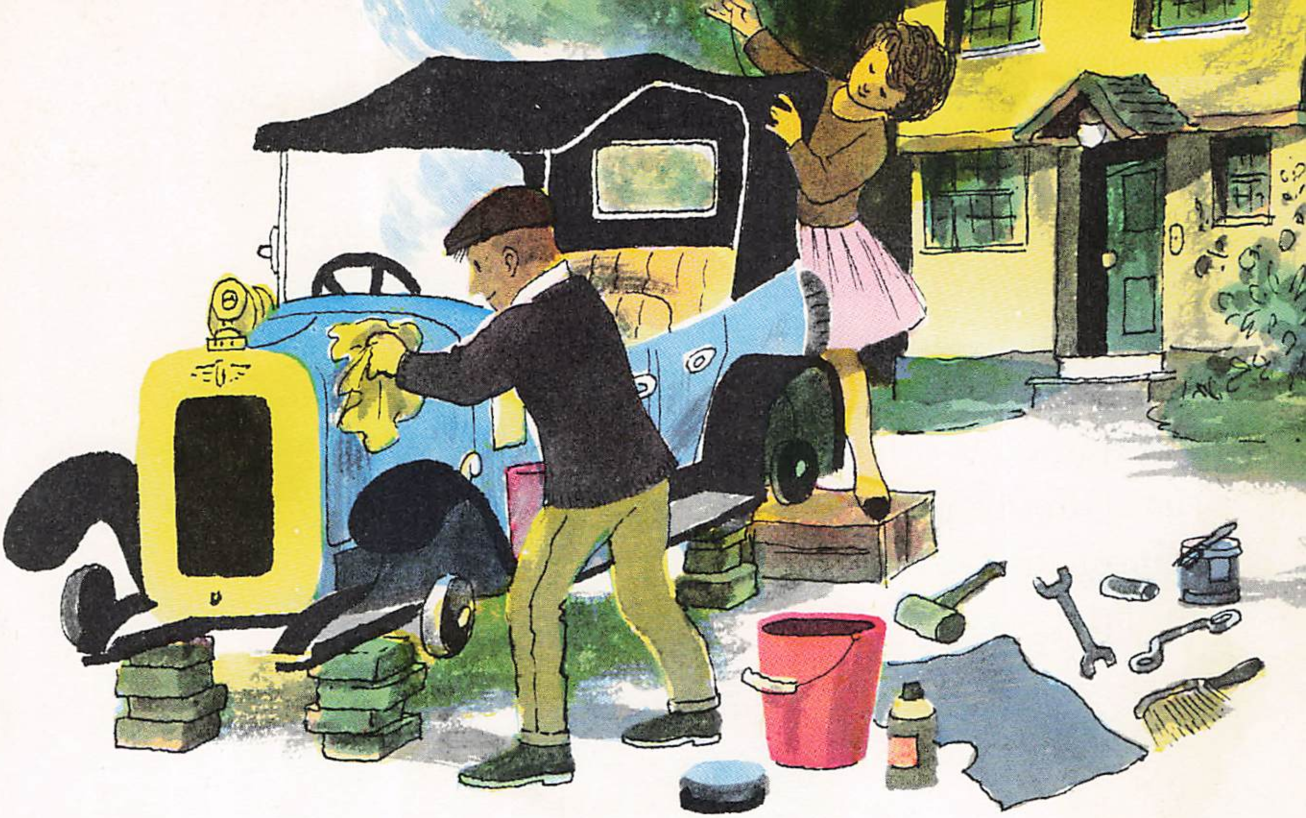


One morning, just as Mr Blops was getting up, a man appeared at the gate of the field.

'Excuse me,' said the man. 'I am a vintage car enthusiast and I have been looking for just such a model to rebuild for next year's vintage car competition. My name is Bill McArran. Would you sell your car to me?'

Mr Blops accepted the money with dignified pleasure. He was sad to lose his home, but proud that the car which he had kept so tidy and clean would once more be used for its proper purpose.





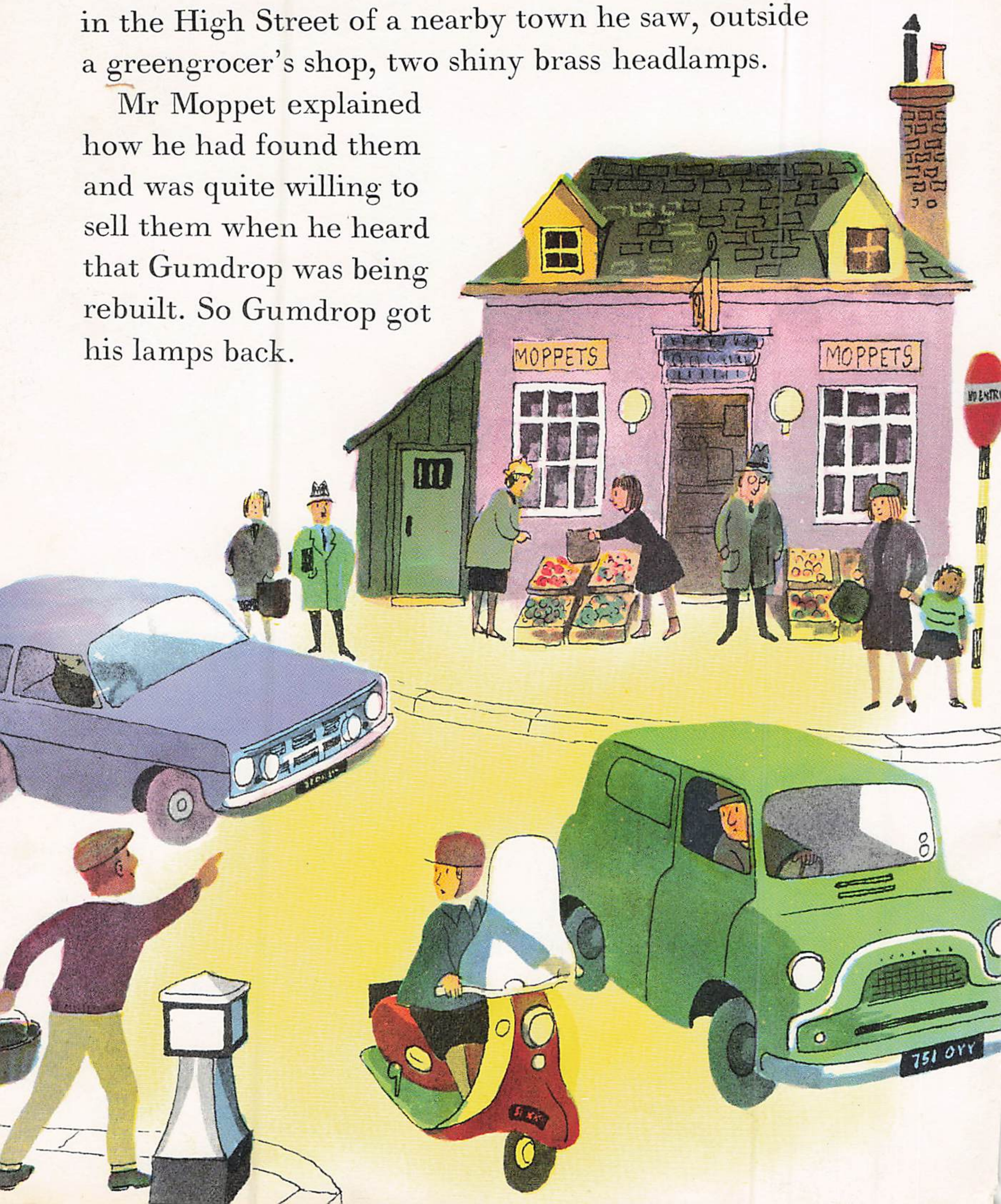
So Bill McArran brought a lorry to collect Gumdrop, and took him to his home. The next day he started work. He straightened the dents in Gumdrop's wings. He polished the sides, and his wife mended the hood.

After weeks of hard work Gumdrop stood shining as good as new – but he had no wheels, no engine, no battery, no lamps, no instruments (speedometer, ammeter and clock), and no horn.

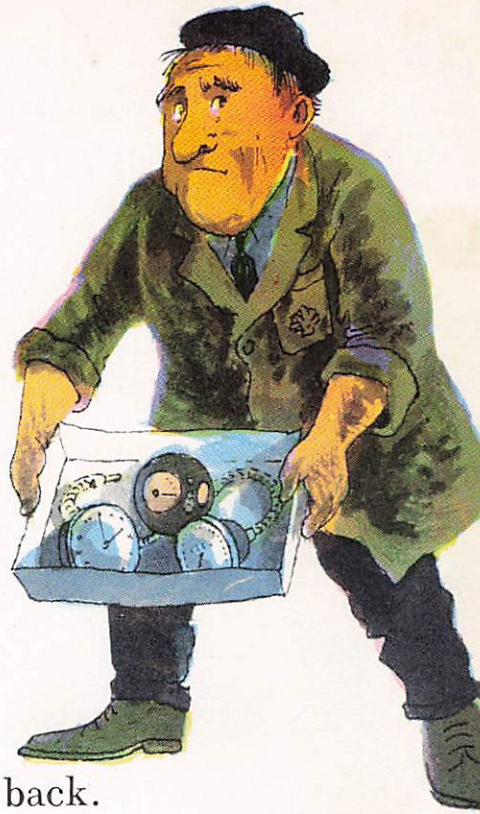
'I can't find these things just anywhere,' said Bill. 'They aren't sold any more. Anyway a car cannot enter the competition unless all its parts were made at the same time as the car itself was built.'

Bill searched for a long time, until one day when he was in the High Street of a nearby town he saw, outside a greengrocer's shop, two shiny brass headlamps.

Mr Moppet explained how he had found them and was quite willing to sell them when he heard that Gumdrop was being rebuilt. So Gumdrop got his lamps back.



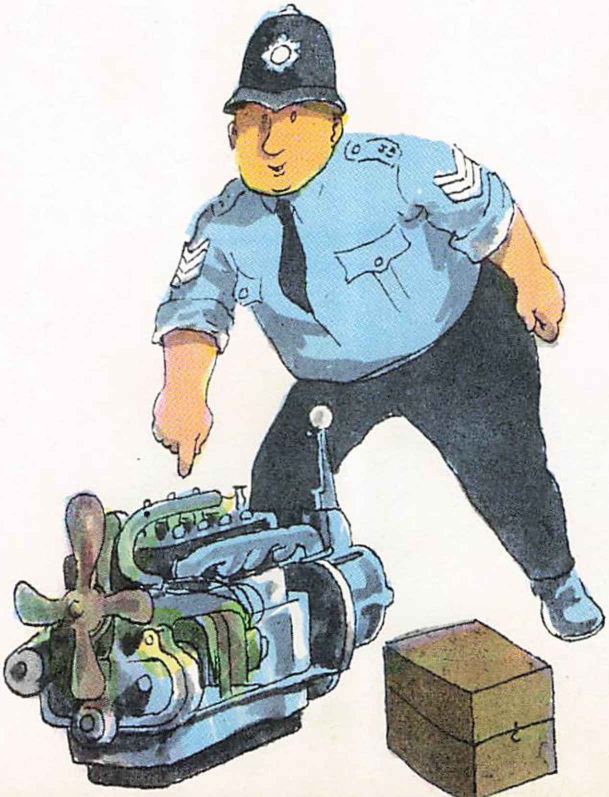
Down the road Bill saw a garage and thought he would buy some cables for the lamps. Mr Pluggett said, 'I had an old crock like yours once. The police towed him away and I said I didn't want him any more. But I've still got the instruments.'



And Mr Pluggett brought out Gumdrop's speedometer, his ammeter, and his clock.

So Gumdrop got his instruments back.

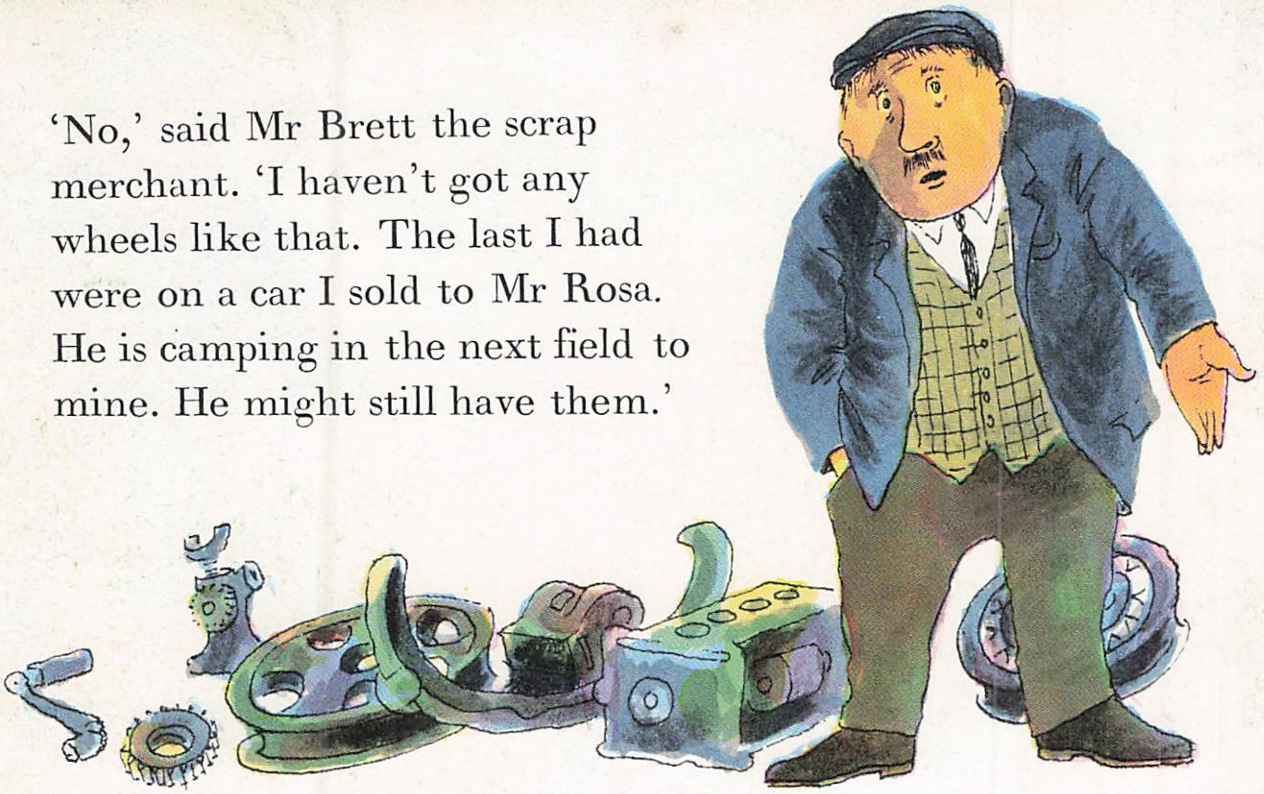
'Yes,' said the sergeant of police. 'We kept the car's engine to drive our cement mixer. We've finished the job now. You are welcome to have it if you like.'



So Gumdrop got his engine and his battery back.

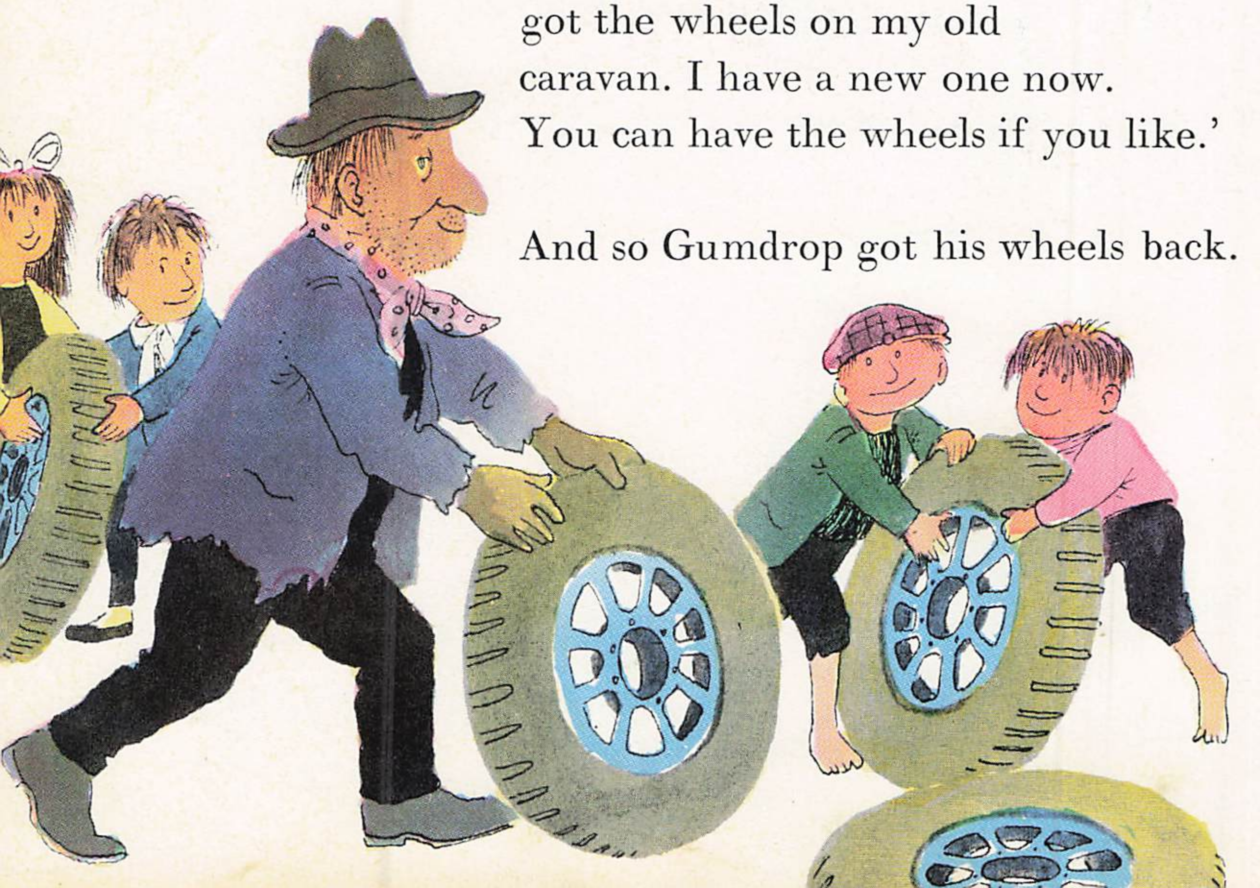
Then the sergeant explained how Gumdrop had been left with the scrap merchant. Perhaps that was where Bill would find four 21-inch, six-stud Sankey wheels to fit Gumdrop.

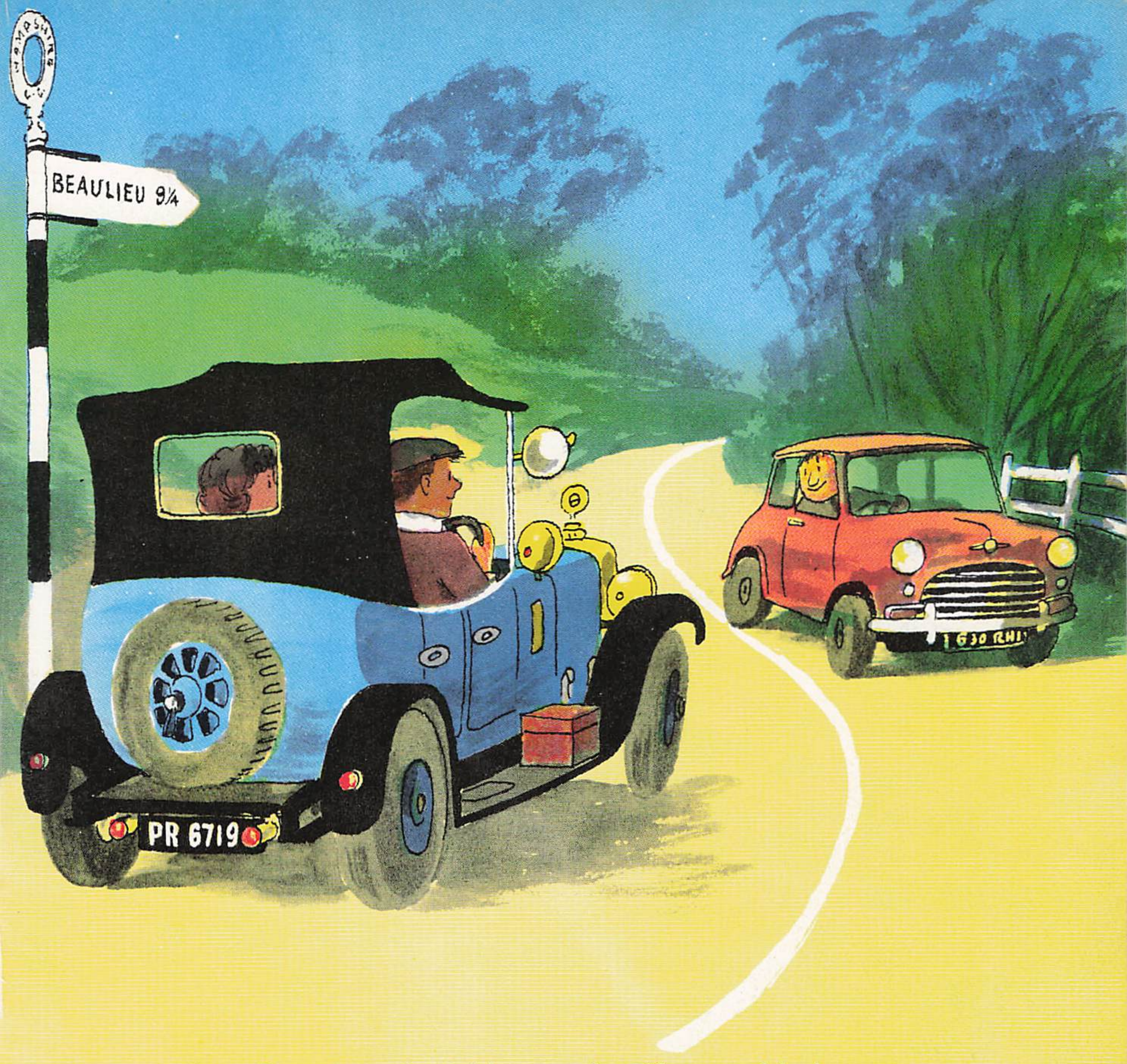
'No,' said Mr Brett the scrap merchant. 'I haven't got any wheels like that. The last I had were on a car I sold to Mr Rosa. He is camping in the next field to mine. He might still have them.'



'Why, yes,' said Mr Rosa. 'I've got the wheels on my old caravan. I have a new one now. You can have the wheels if you like.'

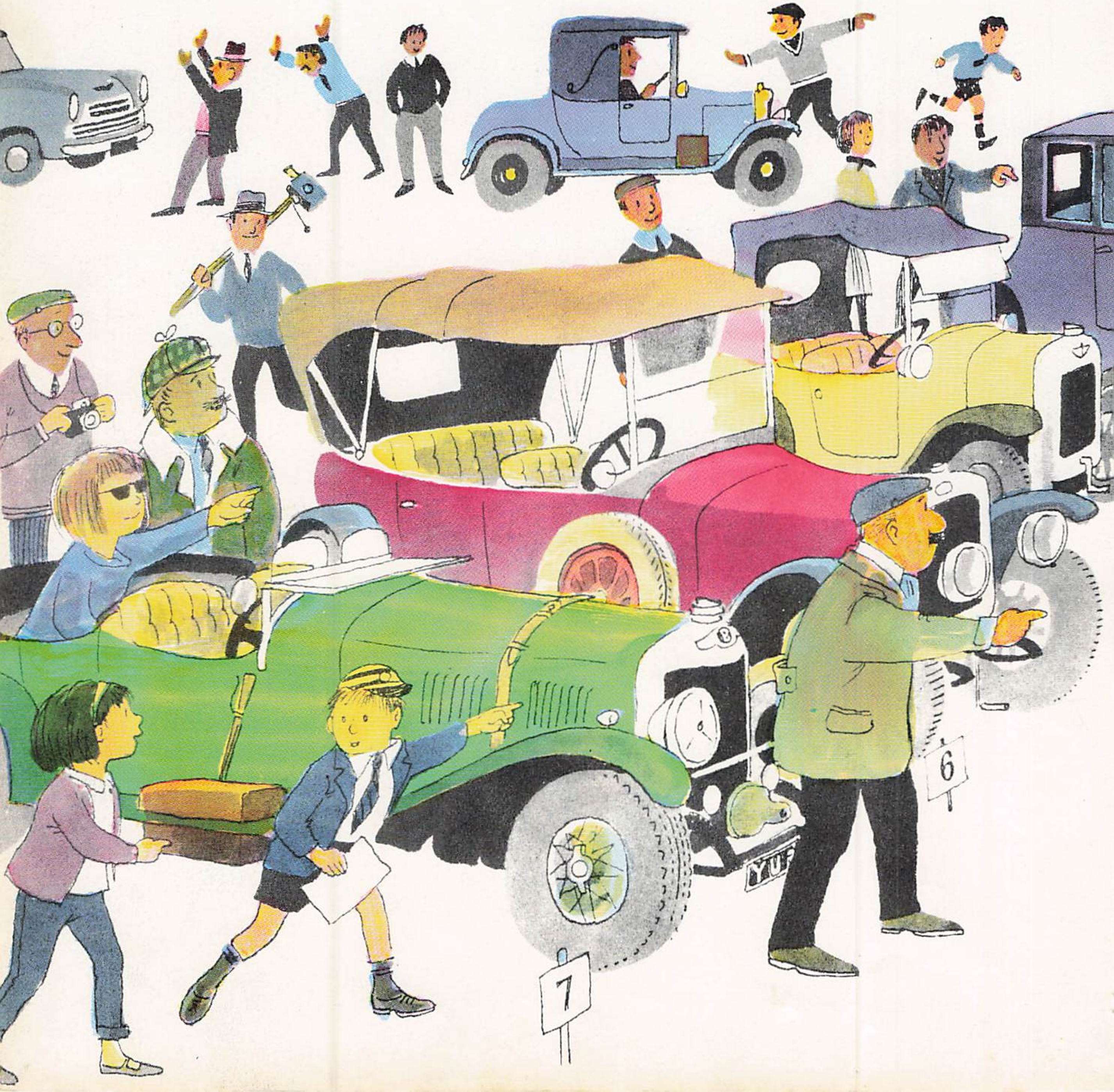
And so Gumdrop got his wheels back.

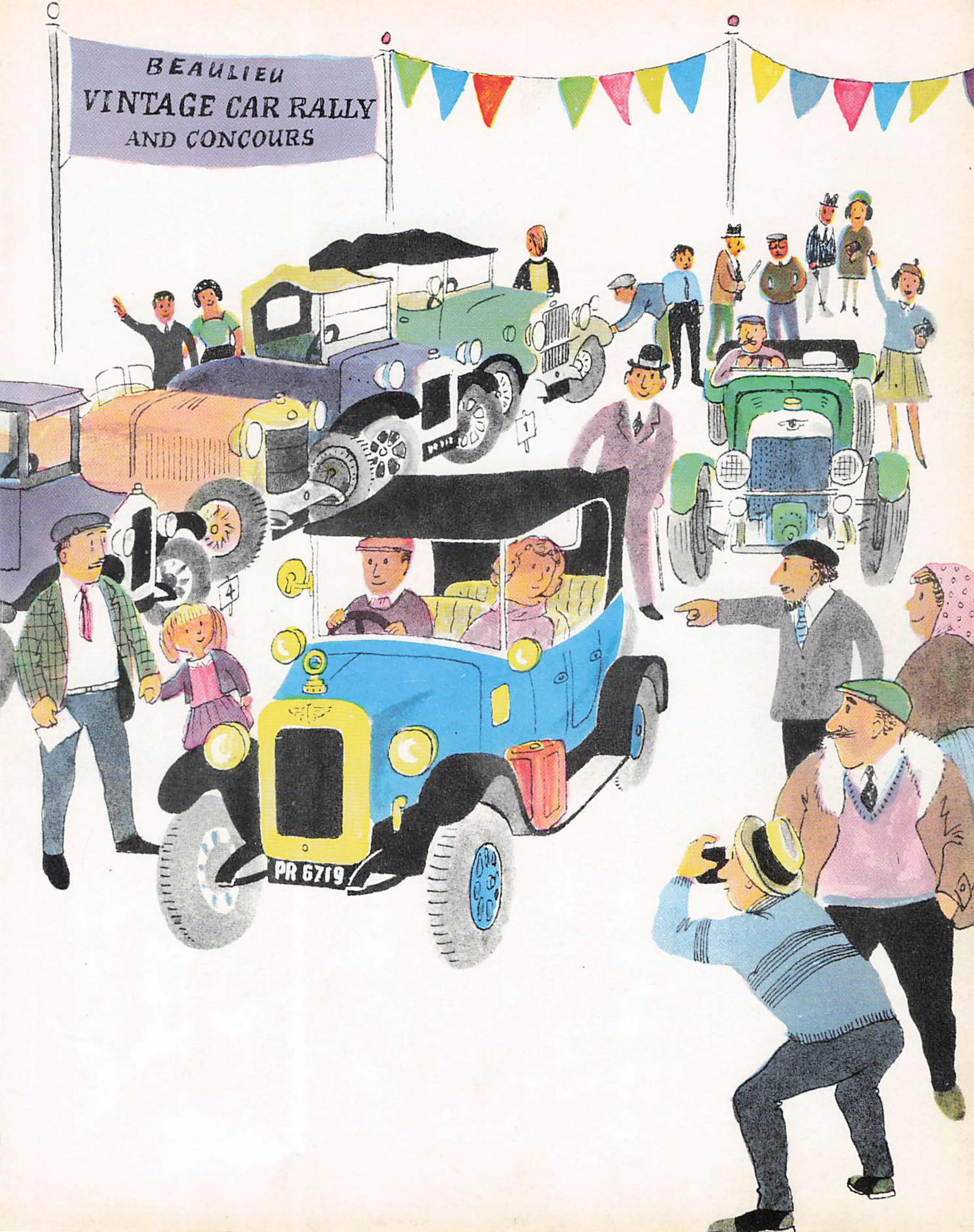



BEAULIEU 9¼
PR 6719
630 RH

Now Gumdrop had his own headlamps, his instruments, his engine and his wheels. He also had a mirror and a number-plate. Bill was very proud one day as he drove Gumdrop to take part in the vintage car competition.

Many fine old cars were already there when they arrived. 'Look at that,' people cried. 'An Austin Clifton Twelve-Four. There can't be many of those around.'

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VINTAGE CAR RALLY
AND CONCOURS
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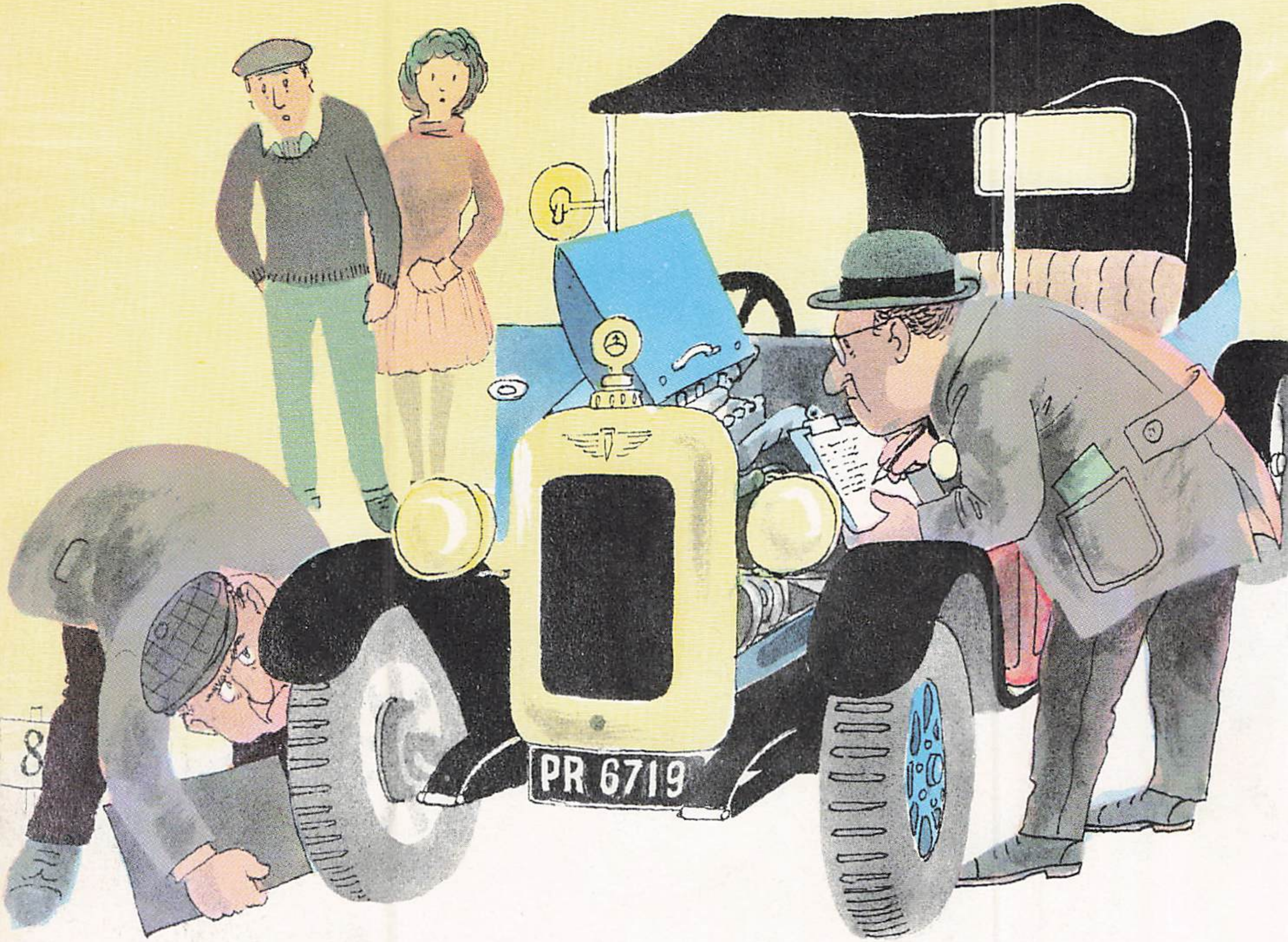
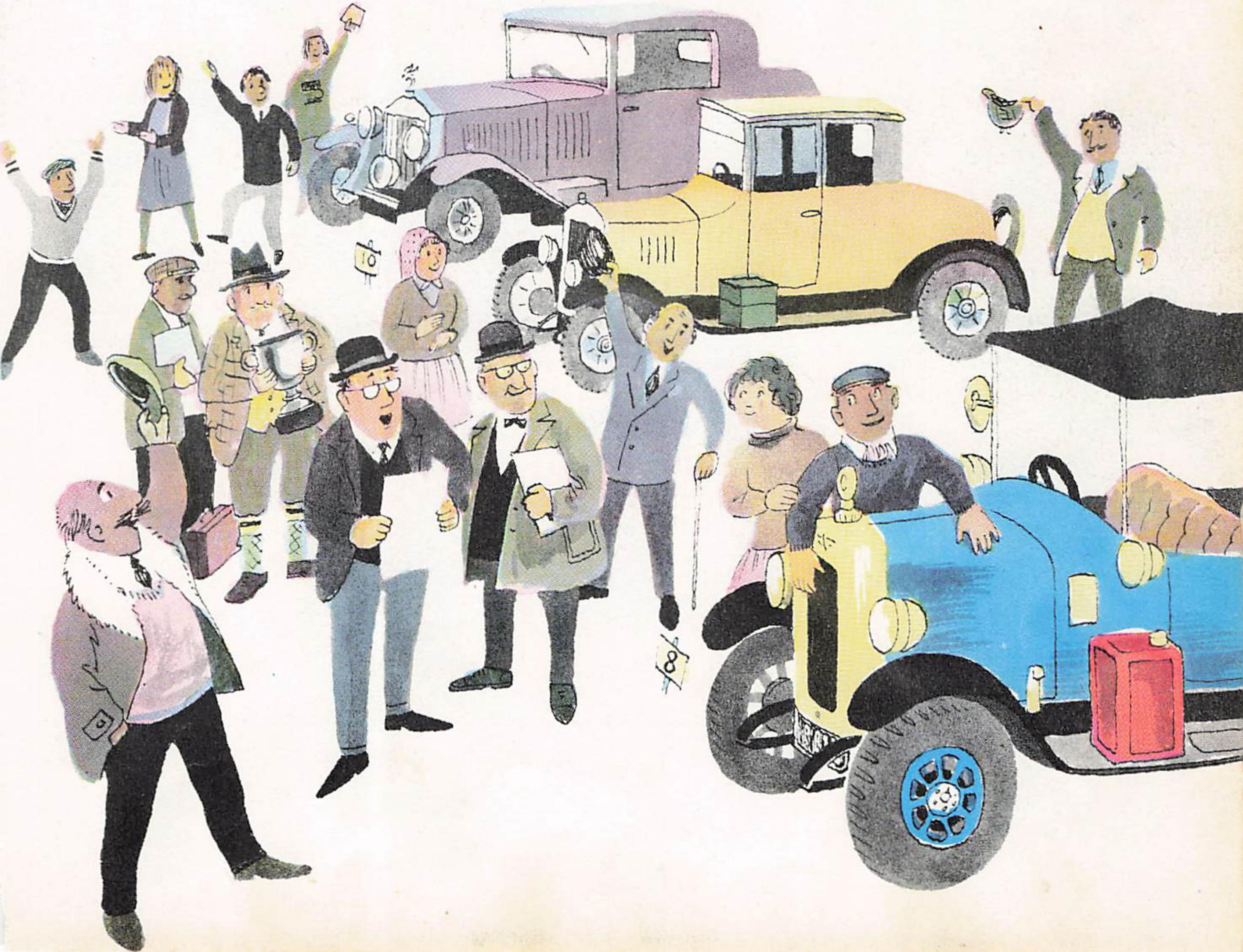


The judging began. Two stern-looking men came round. They opened Gumdrop's doors, peered inside, looked under the bonnet and made long notes in their notebooks. Then they nodded to each other and went on to the next car.

Towards evening, an announcement was heard. 'Ladies and gentlemen, the judging is now completed. In the opinion of the judges the first prize must go to the 1926 Austin Clifton Twelve-Four, belonging to Mr Bill McArran.' There were cheers. Bill slapped Gumdrop on the bonnet in his joy.

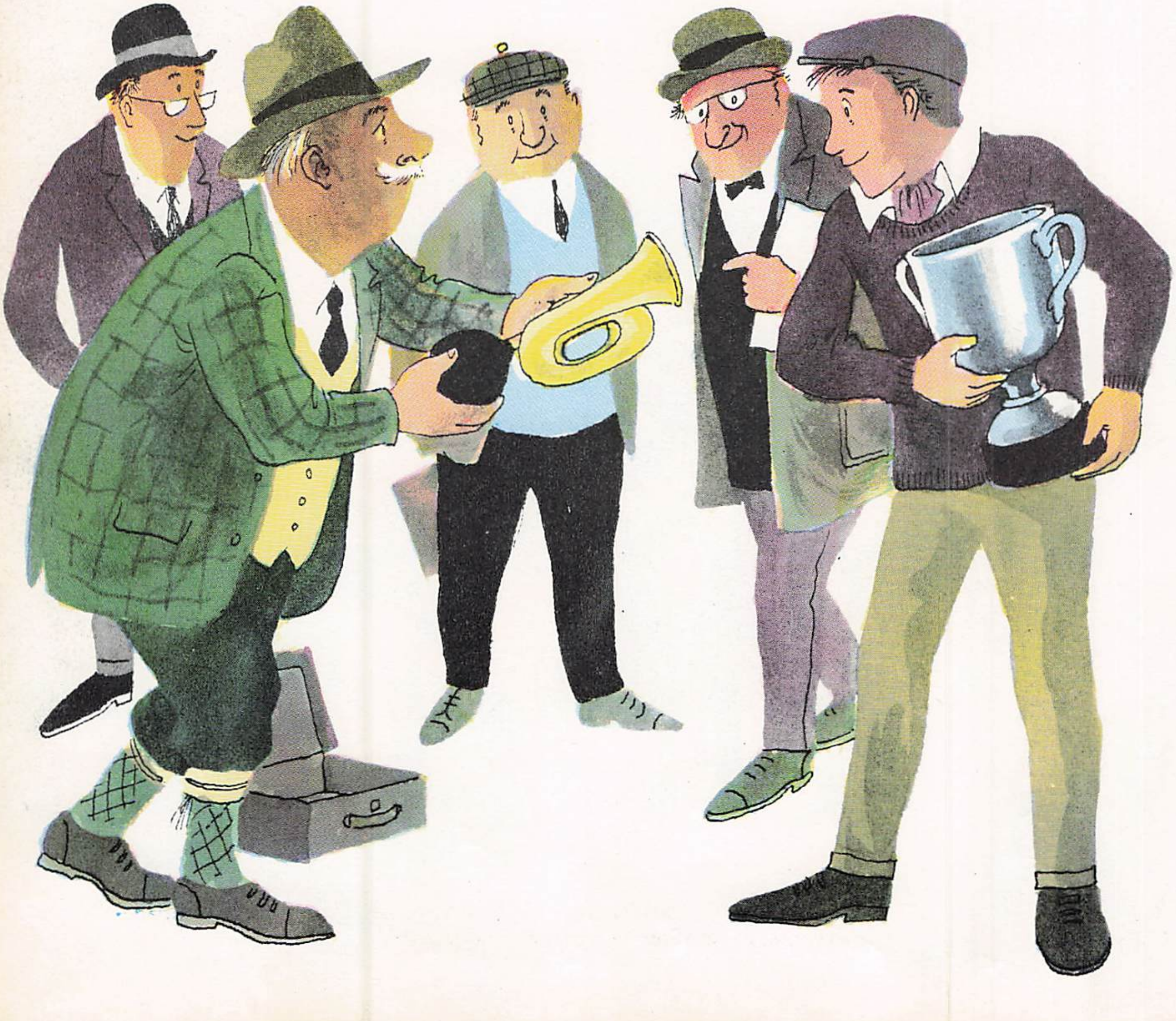
'And now,' went on the announcer, 'the prize will be presented by the President of our Club, Mr Oldcastle.'

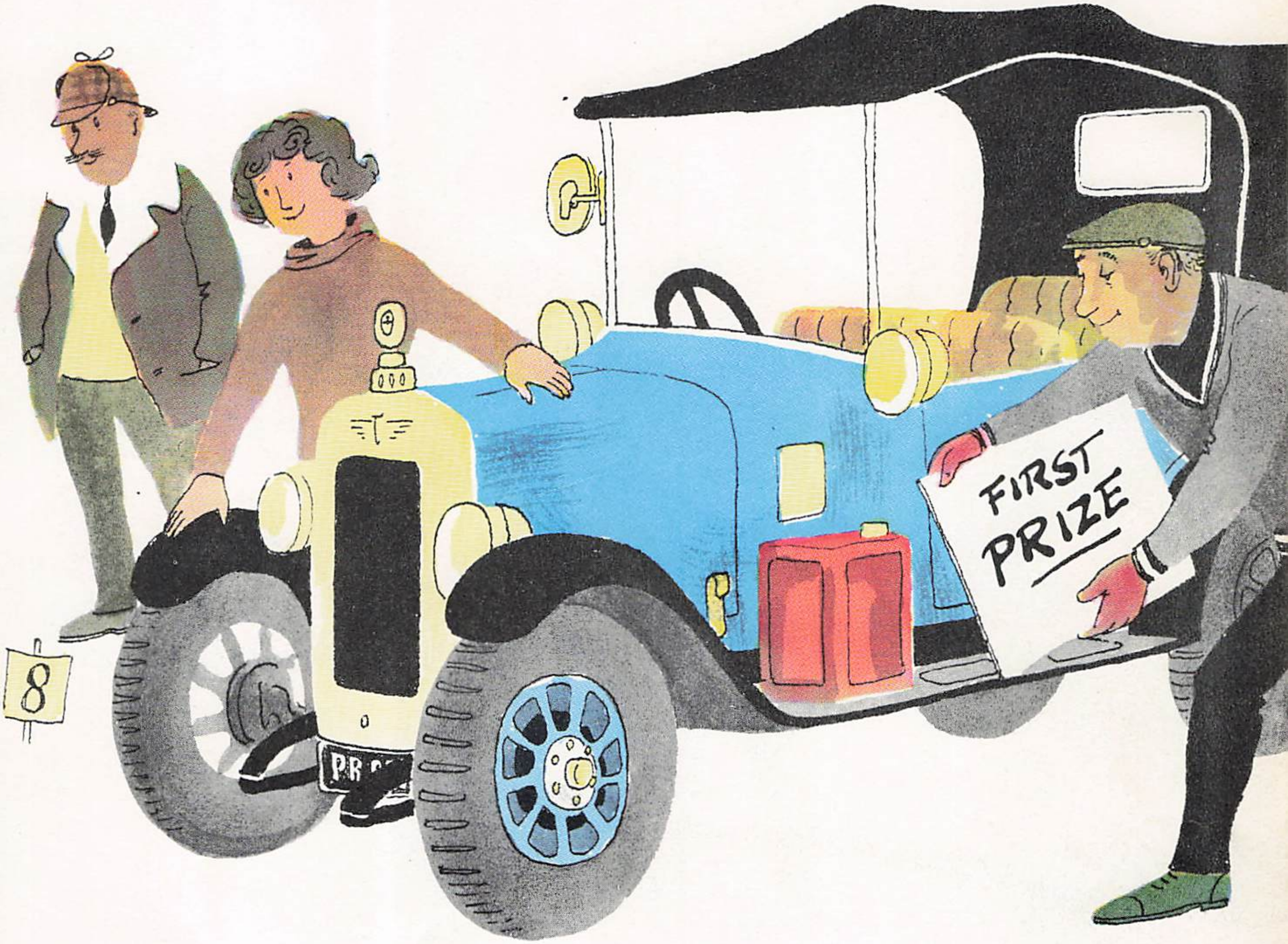


Mr Oldcastle! Gumdrop's first owner. He handed Bill the silver cup. Then he opened a small case.

'As a small additional prize,' said Mr Oldcastle, 'allow me to give you a piece of equipment which I believe is the only original part still missing.' And he pulled out from his case Gumdrop's shiny brass horn.

So Gumdrop got his horn back too.

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FIRST PRIZE
PR

Gumdrop – The Adventures of a Vintage Car
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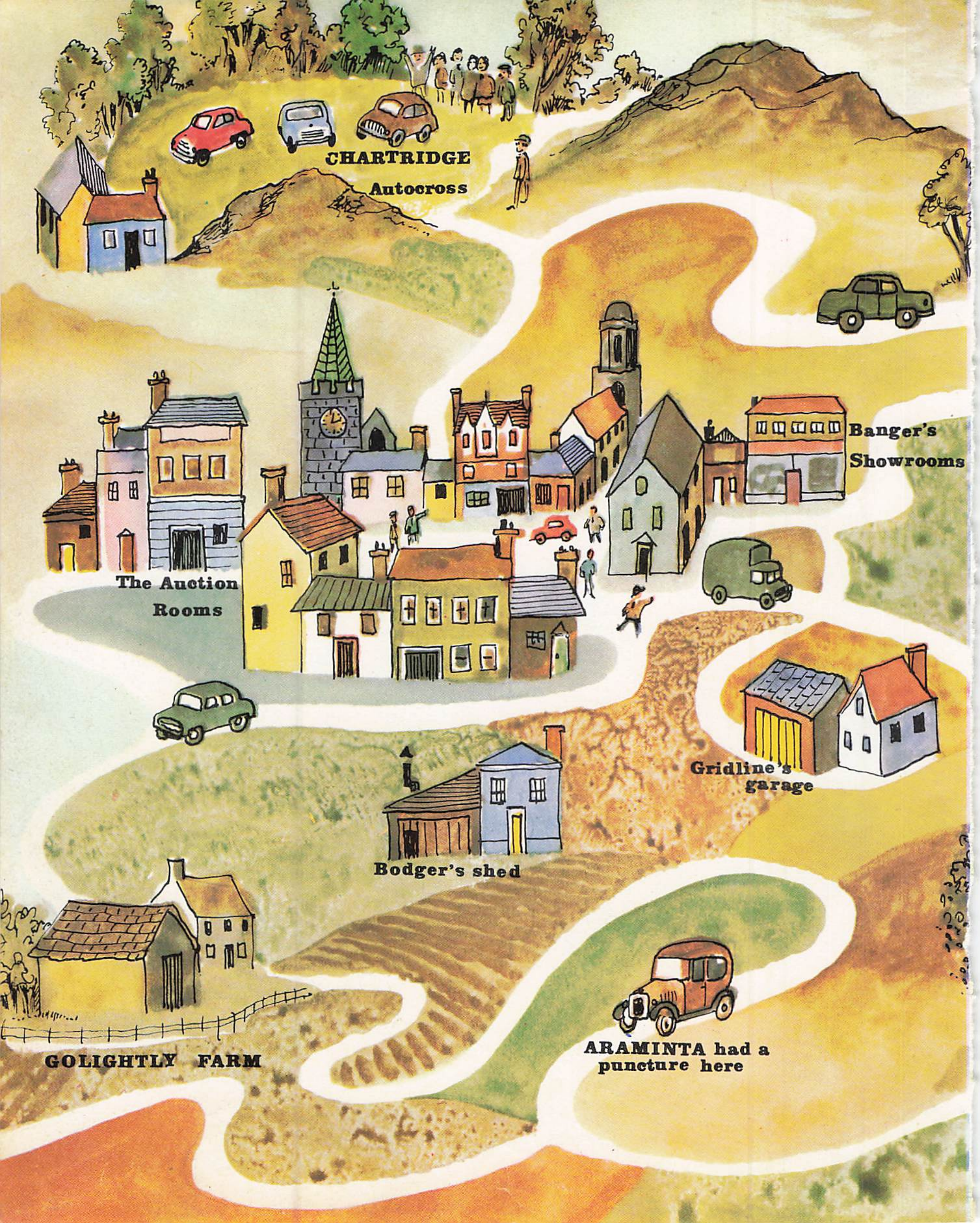
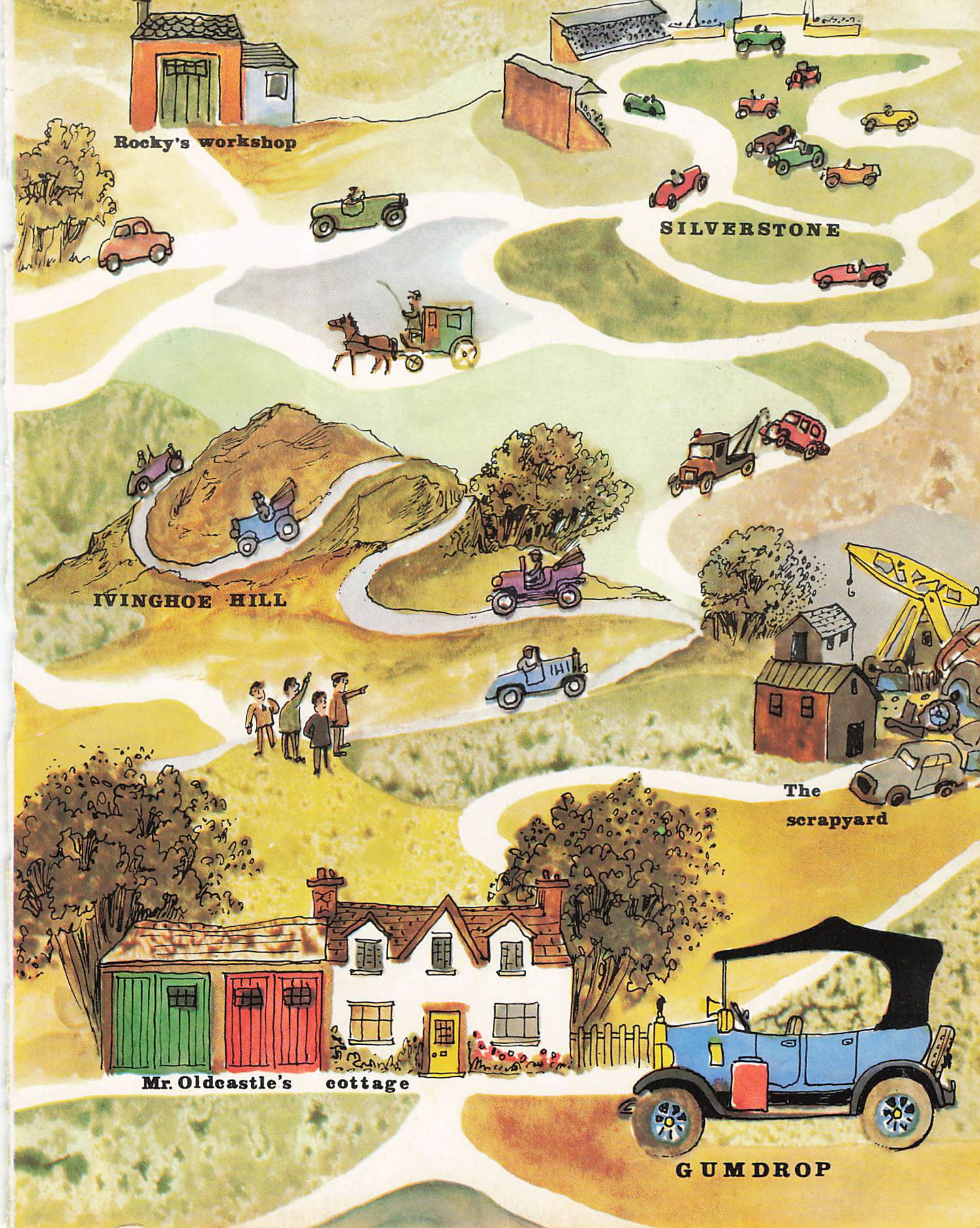
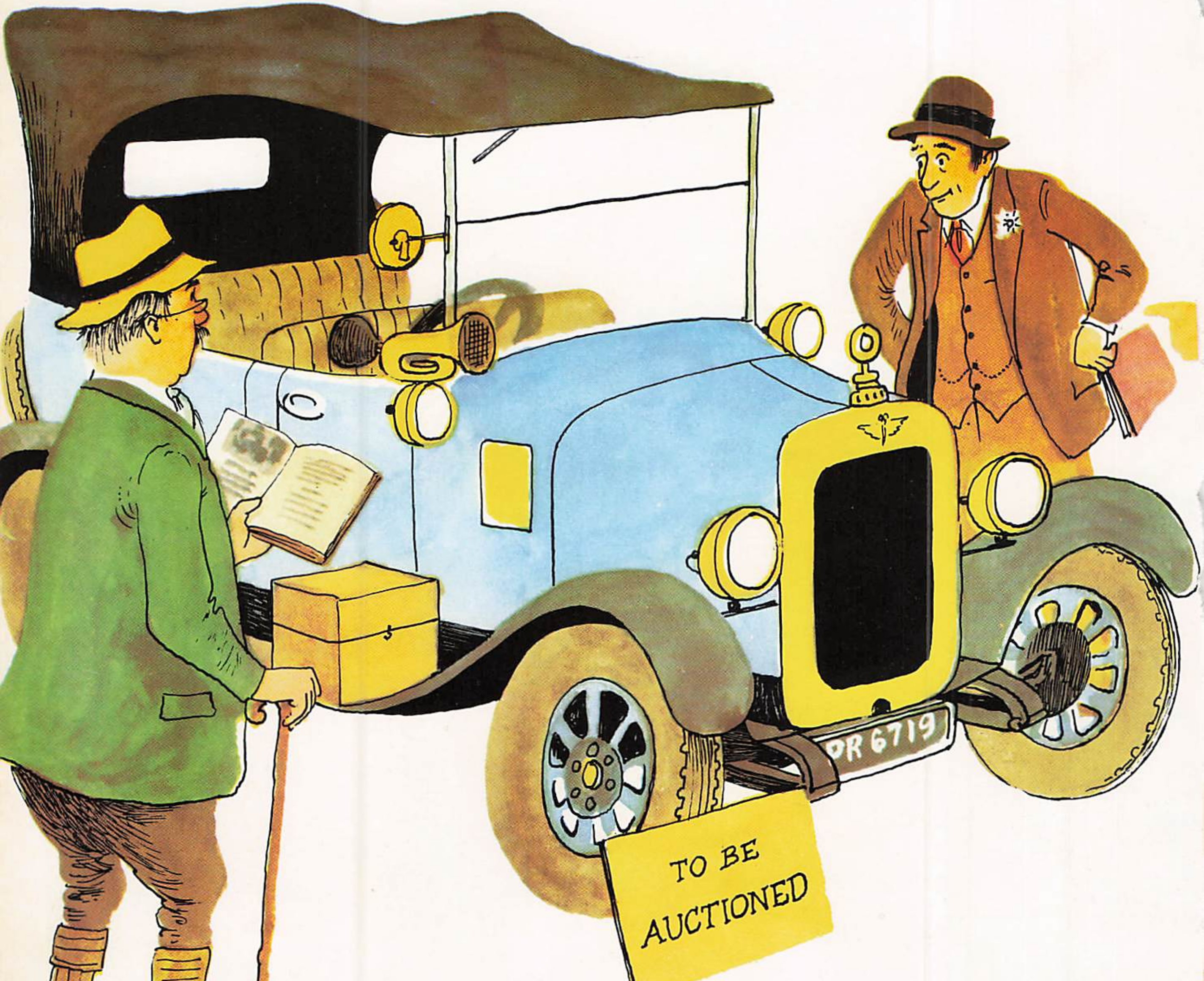

CHARTRIDGE
Autocross
Banger's
Showrooms
The Auction
Rooms
Gridline's
garage
Bodger's shed
GOLIGHTLY FARM
ARAMINTA had a
puncture here


Rocky's workshop
SILVERSTONE
IVINGHOE HILL
The scrapyard
Mr. Oldcastle's cottage
GUMDROP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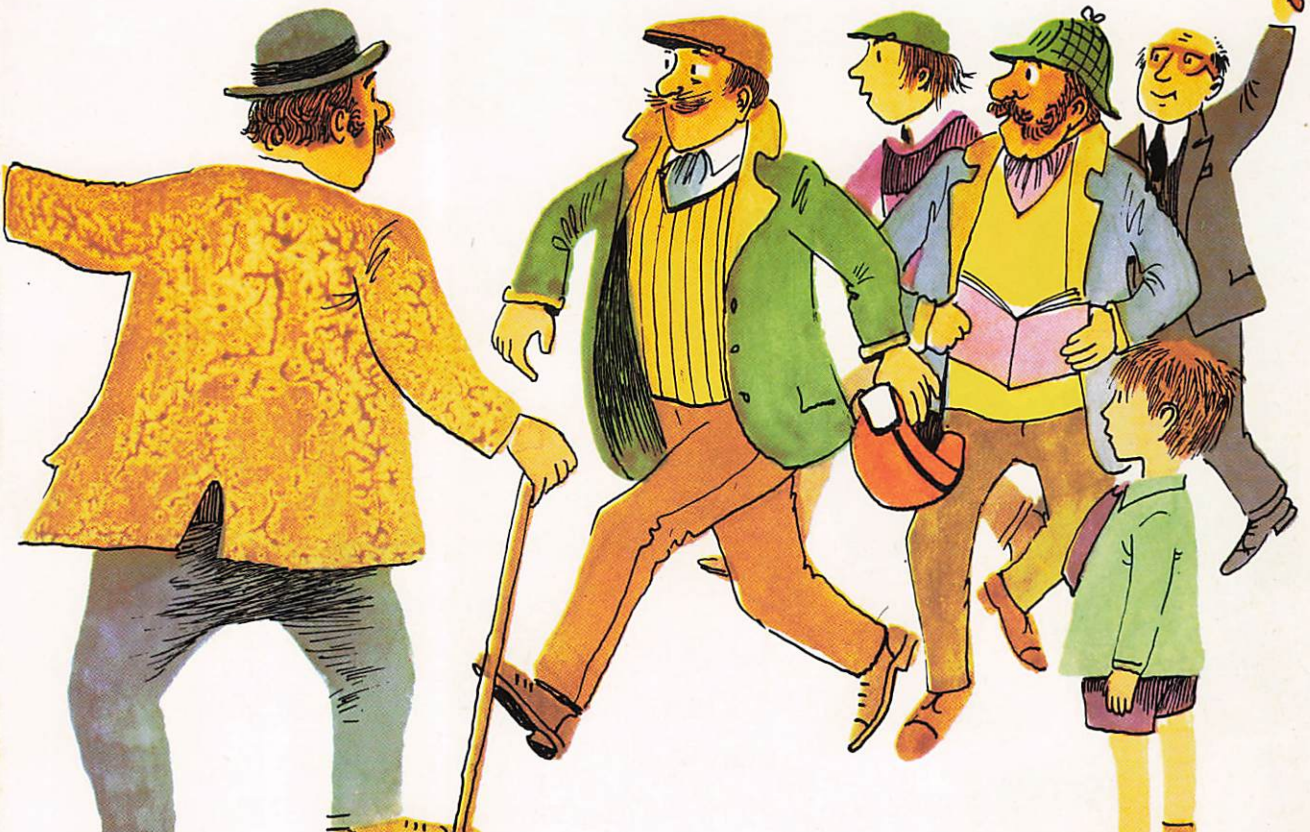
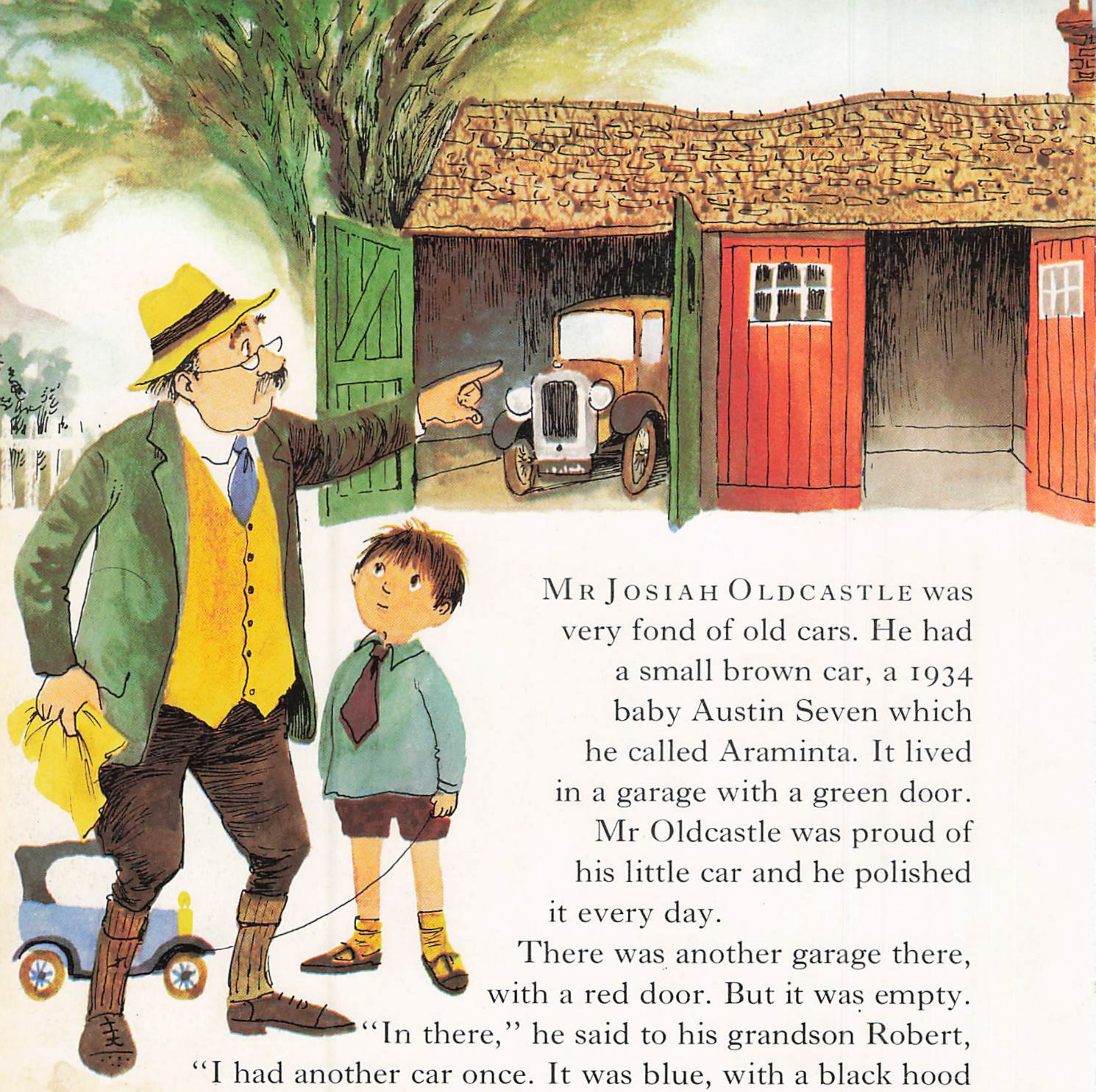
TO BE AUCTIONED

GUMDROP ON THE MOVE

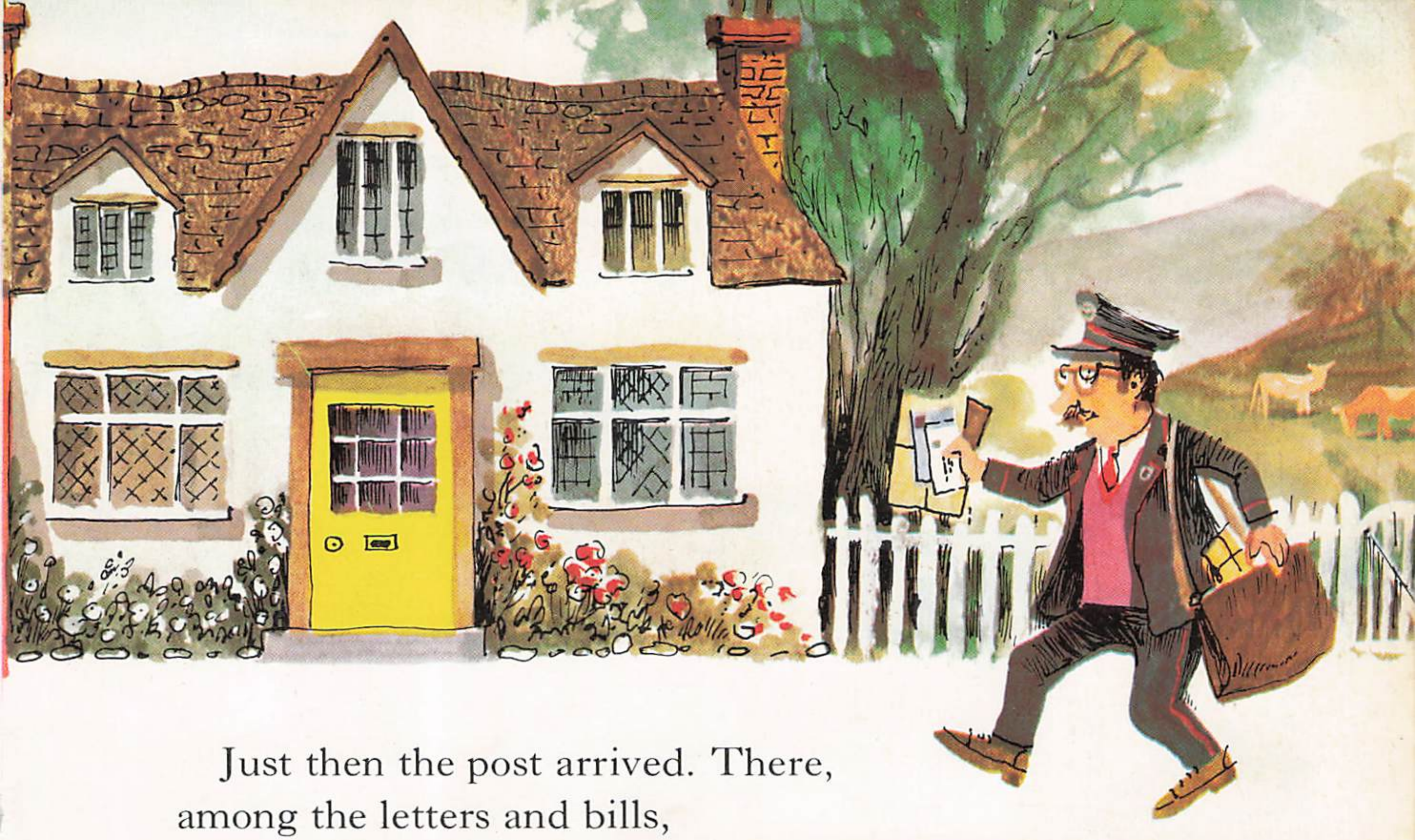
Story and pictures by Val Biro





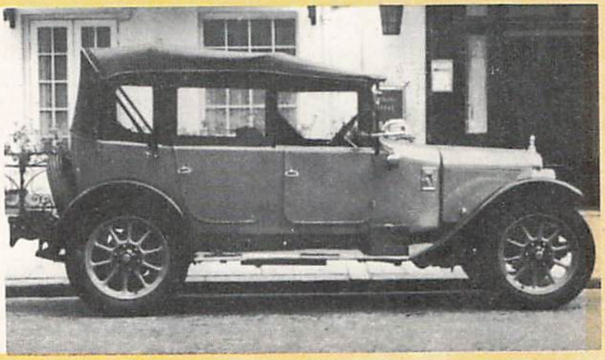
MR JOSIAH OLDCASTLE was very fond of old cars. He had a small brown car, a 1934 baby Austin Seven which he called Araminta. It lived in a garage with a green door. Mr Oldcastle was proud of his little car and he polished it every day.

There was another garage there, with a red door. But it was empty. "In there," he said to his grandson Robert, "I had another car once. It was blue, with a black hood and a brass horn: a genuine vintage car of 1926. I had to sell it years ago. I wonder where it is now?"



Just then the post arrived. There, among the letters and bills, was a catalogue for "The Sale by Auction of Veteran and Vintage Vehicles" and there, on the first page, was a picture.

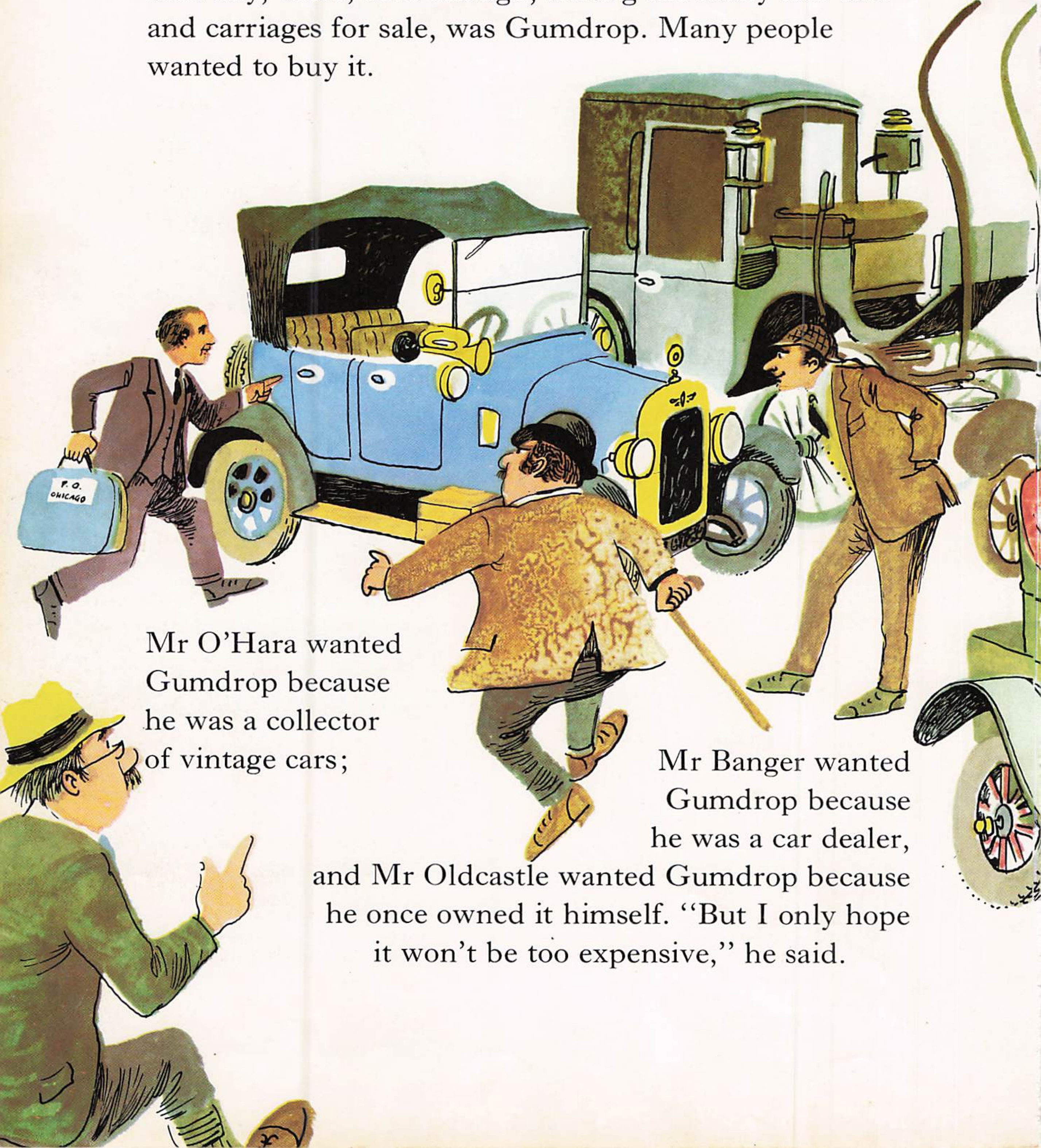
Mr Oldcastle became very excited. "Look!" he said. "Here it is!! This is surely the very car that I had all those years ago, that lived behind the red door!!! It must be GUMDROP!!!!"



TO BE AUCTIONED

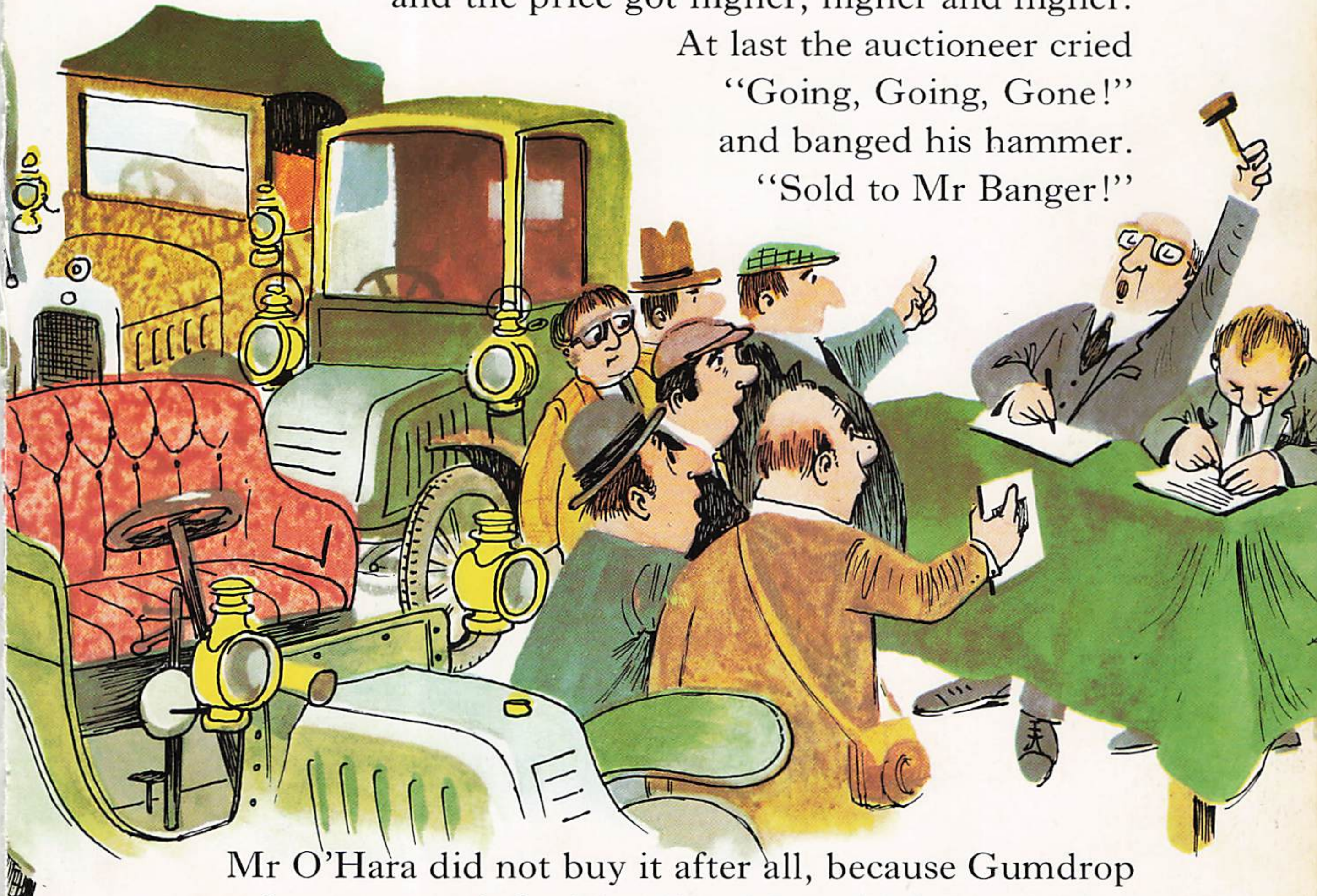
An Austin Clifton Heavy Twelve-Four, vintage 1926. 1660-c.c. four-cylinder side-valve engine, four-speed gearbox, four-wheel brakes. In blue and black livery, black canvas hood, brass radiator, lamps and horn. Complete with battery, spare petrol-tin, spare wheel. All in excellent condition. Best offer secures.

And it was. When Mr Oldcastle went to the auction sale next day, there, sure enough, among the many fine cars and carriages for sale, was Gumdrop. Many people wanted to buy it.



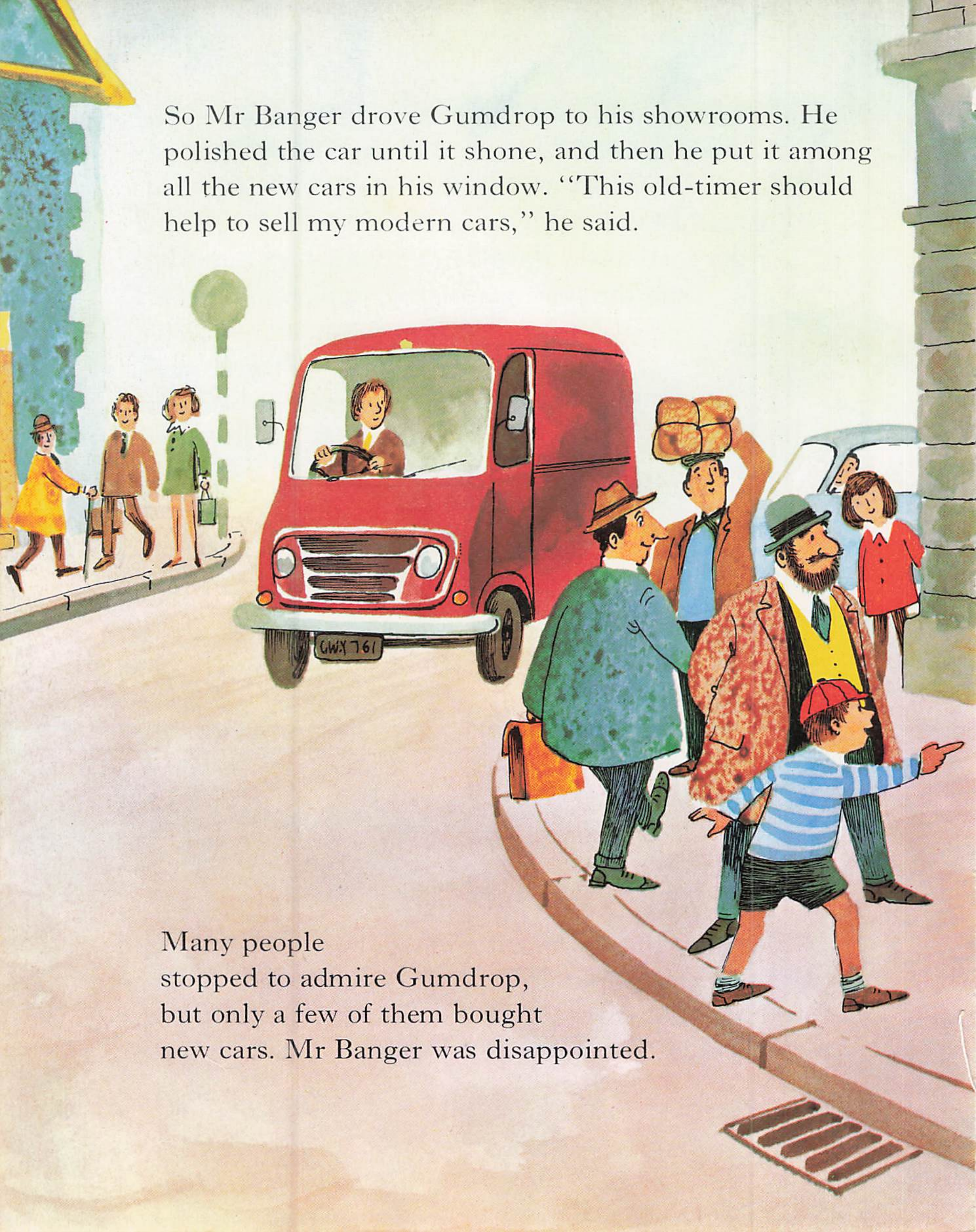
Mr O'Hara wanted Gumdrop because he was a collector of vintage cars; Mr Banger wanted Gumdrop because he was a car dealer, and Mr Oldcastle wanted Gumdrop because he once owned it himself. "But I only hope it won't be too expensive," he said.

The auction began. People called out a price, others called out a higher one, and the highest bidder secured the car. Many were sold this way until it was Gumdrop's turn. "What am I bid for this remarkable vehicle?" shouted the auctioneer. People bid briskly for Gumdrop, and the price got higher, higher and higher. At last the auctioneer cried "Going, Going, Gone!" and banged his hammer. "Sold to Mr Banger!"

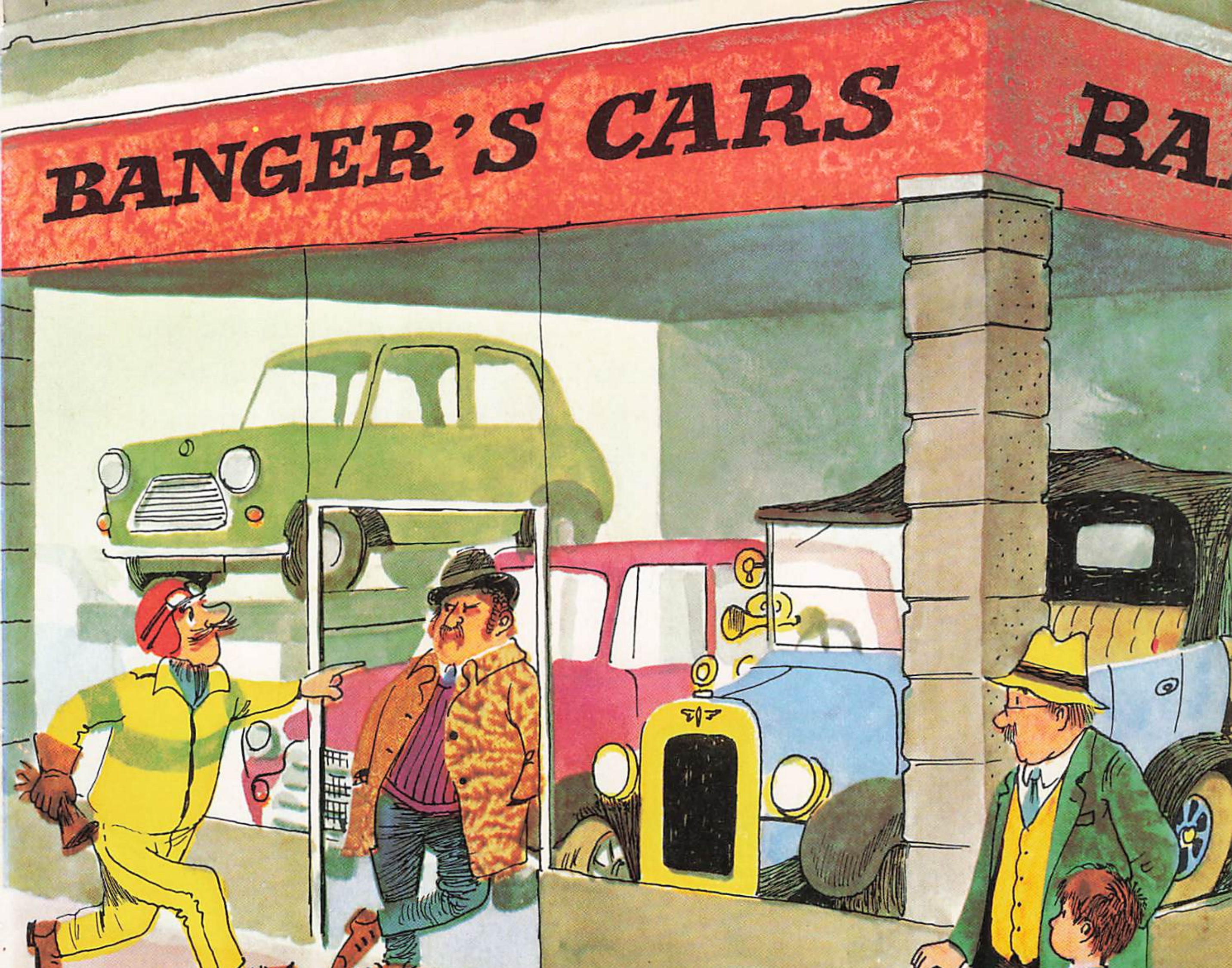


Mr O'Hara did not buy it after all, because Gumdrop wasn't rare enough for him. "And I couldn't buy it after all," said Mr Oldcastle sadly to Robert when he got home, "because Gumdrop wasn't cheap enough for me."

So Mr Banger drove Gumdrop to his showrooms. He polished the car until it shone, and then he put it among all the new cars in his window. "This old-timer should help to sell my modern cars," he said.

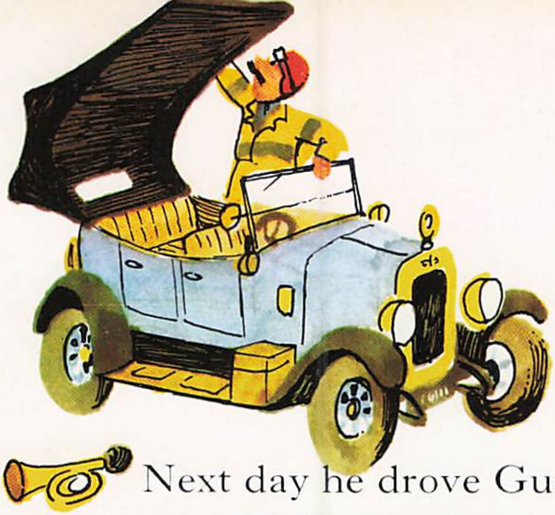


Many people stopped to admire Gumdrop, but only a few of them bought new cars. Mr Banger was disappointed.

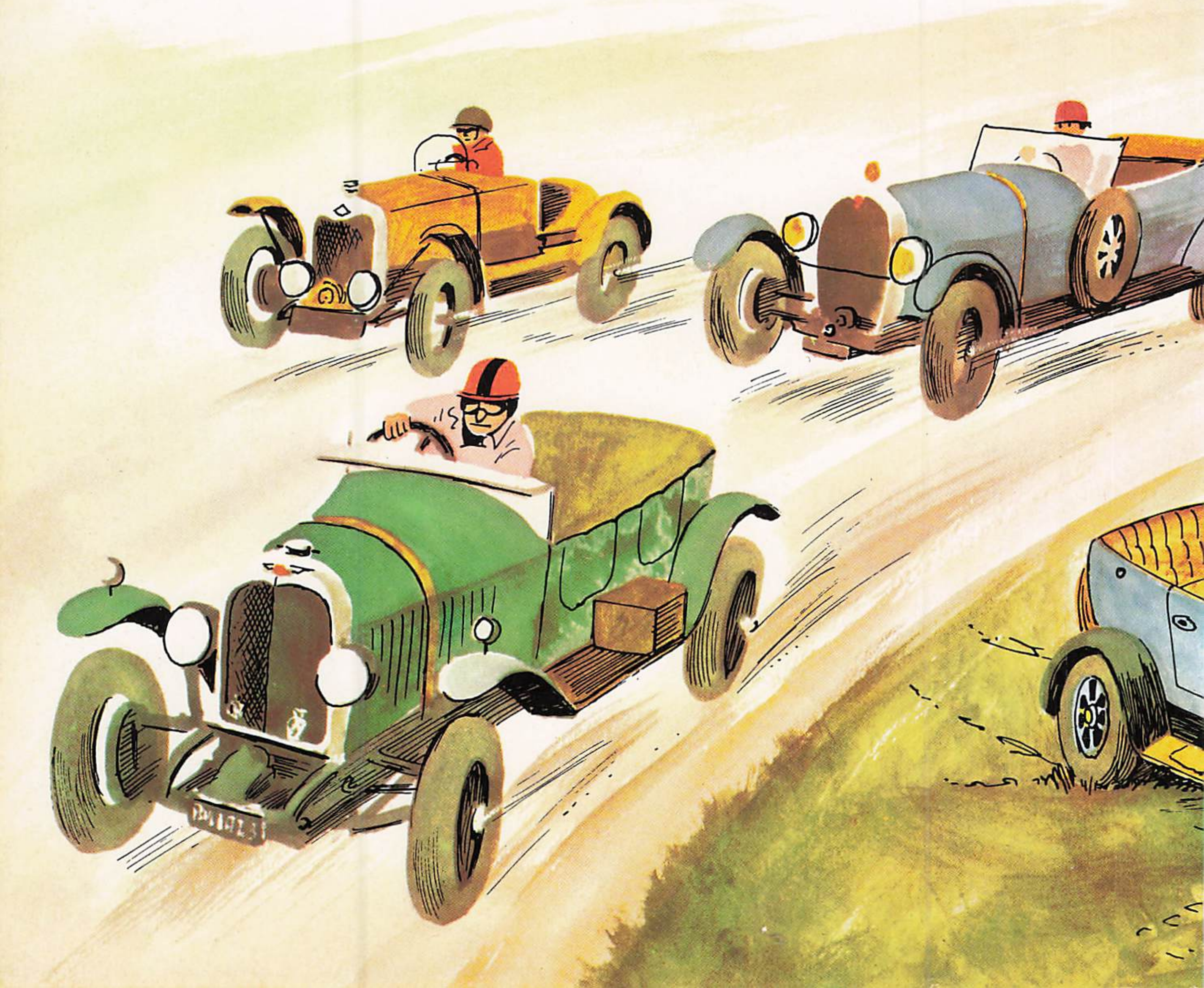


Archibald Gridline came
into the shop one day. "I don't
want a new car," he said, "but will
you sell me that blue vintage Austin there?
I want to race it at Silverstone."

"I might as well," said Mr Banger, "because after all
the car isn't smart enough for me."

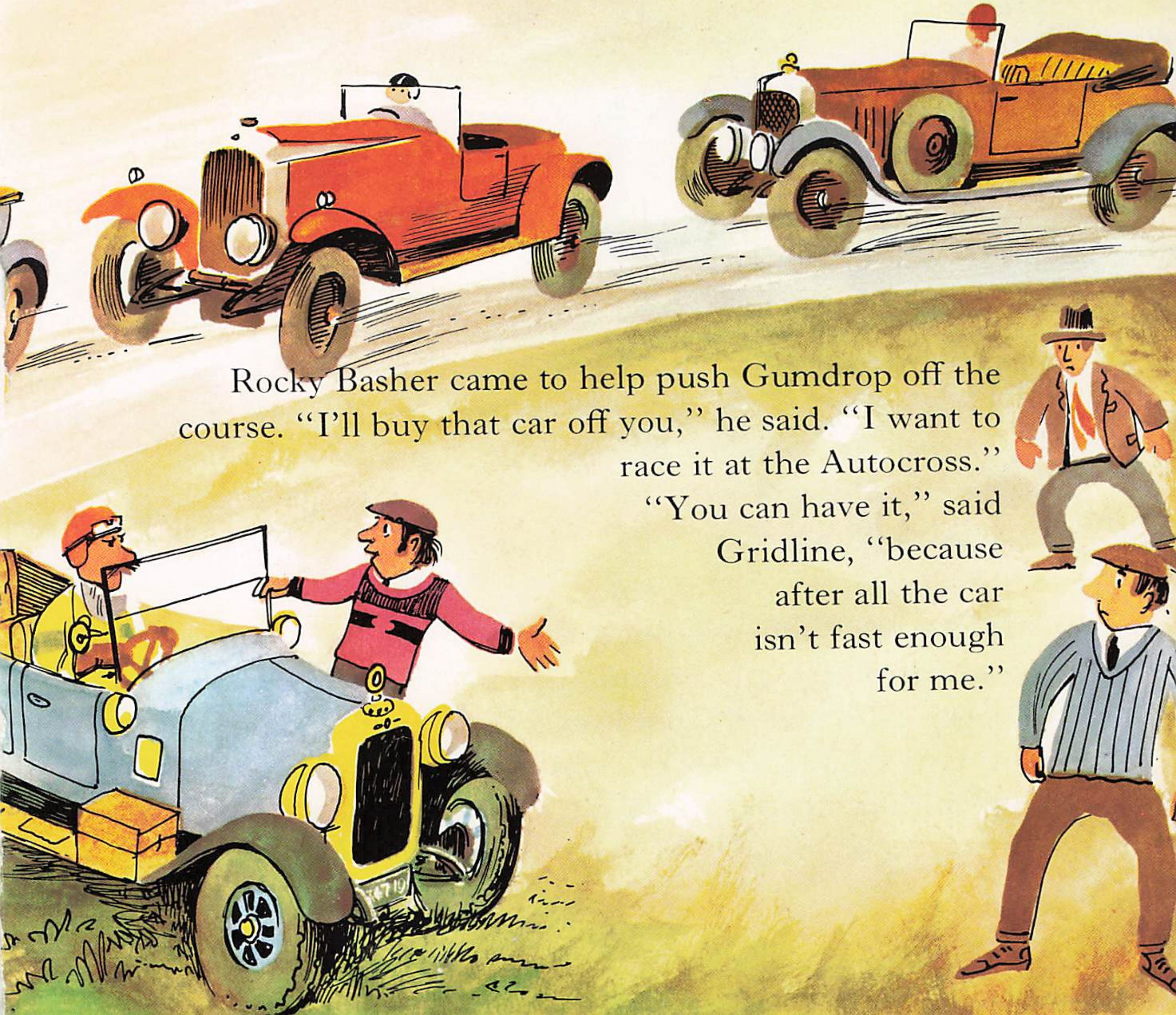


So Archibald Gridline drove Gumdrop to his garage. There he removed the hood so that Gumdrop could go faster, and he unscrewed the horn and put it into the tool-box. Next day he drove Gumdrop to Silverstone and entered in the All-Comers Vintage Sports Car Five-Lap Handicap Race.



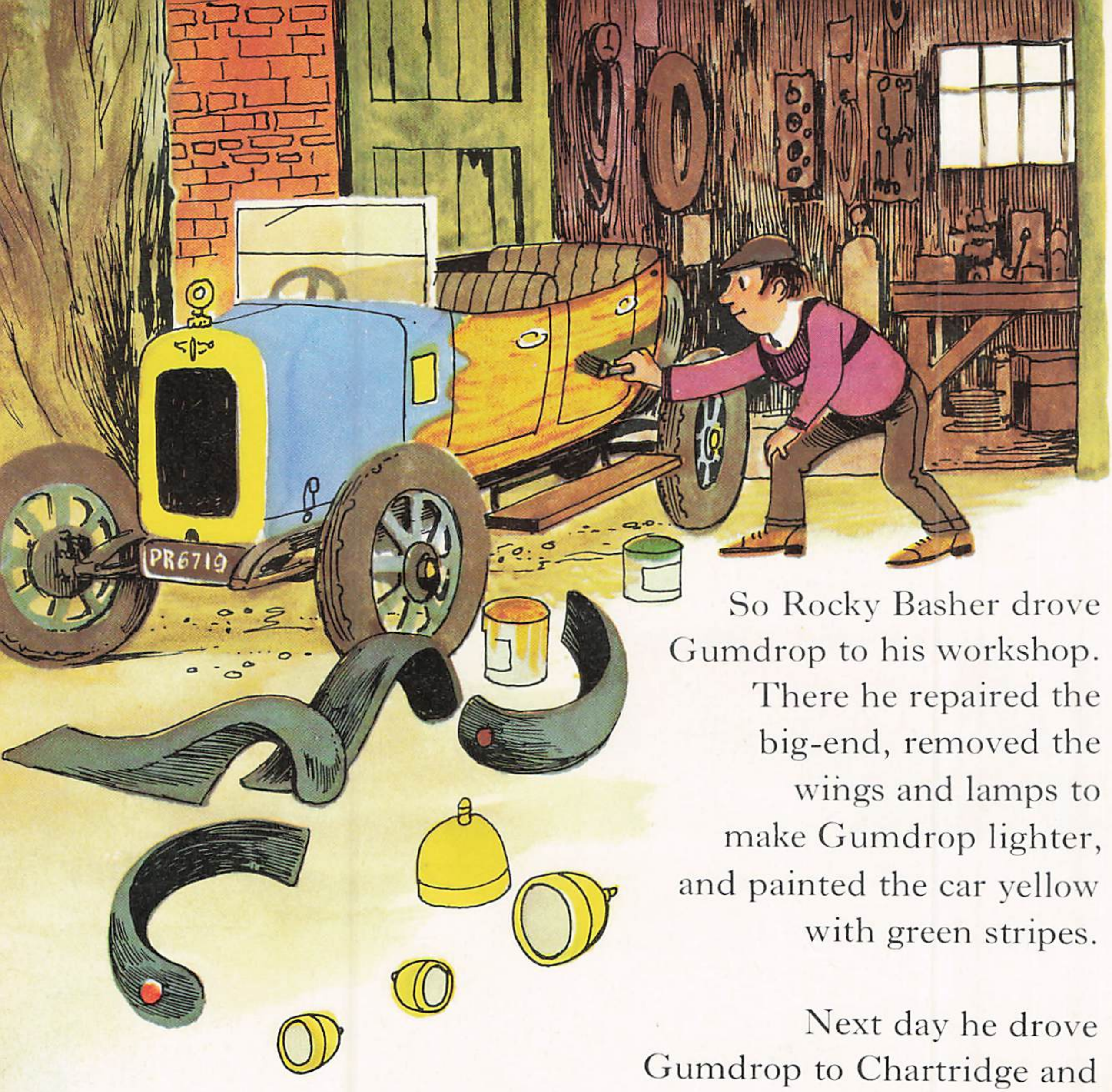
The vintage cars were roaring round the circuit. Gumdrop went faster and faster, but the other cars went faster and faster still. Suddenly there was a big clatter in the engine. Gumdrop stopped.

"That's the big-end!" cried Gridline. "I'm out of the race!" He was very disappointed.



Rocky Basher came to help push Gumdrop off the course. "I'll buy that car off you," he said. "I want to race it at the Autocross."

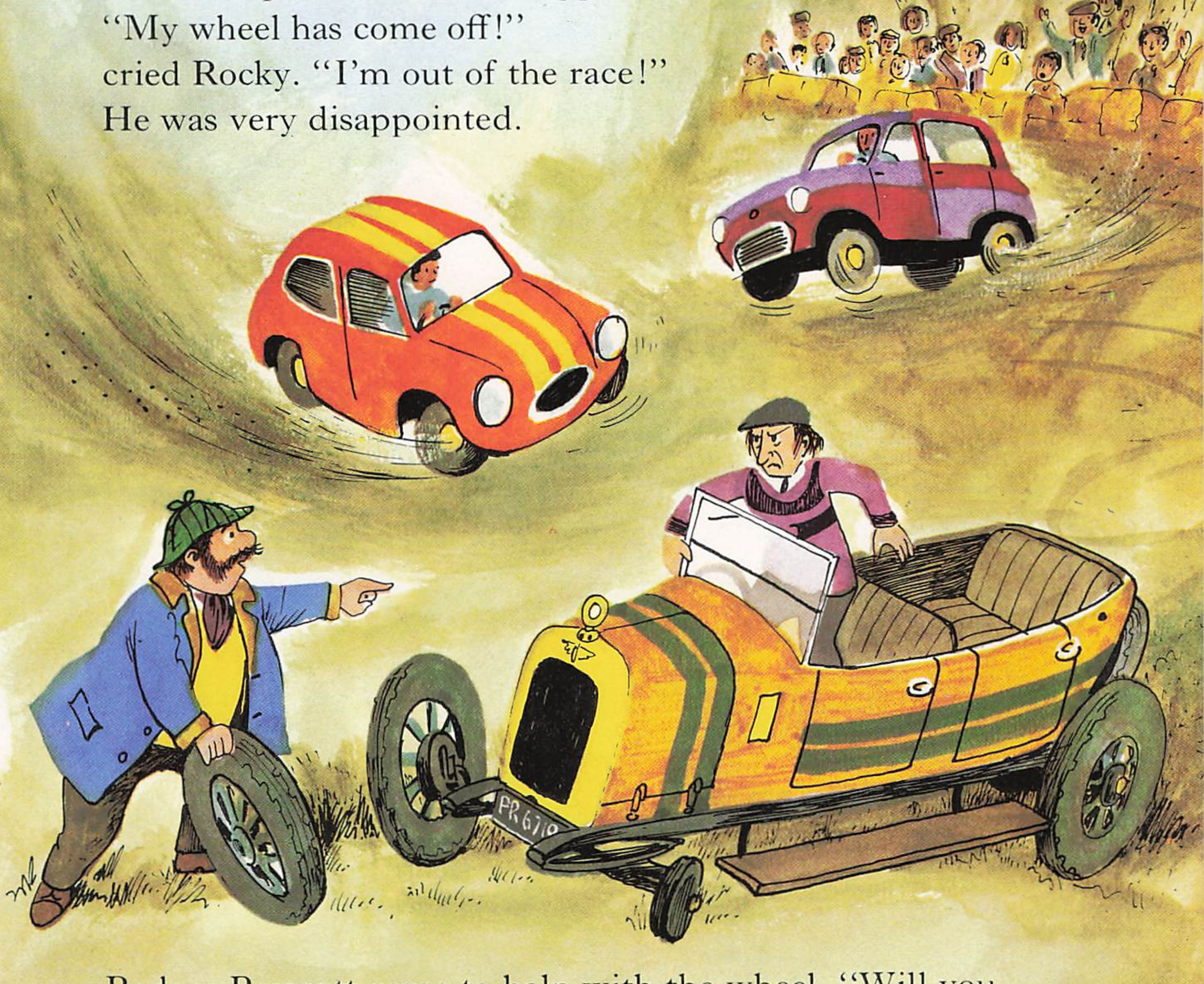
"You can have it," said Gridline, "because after all the car isn't fast enough for me."



So Rocky Basher drove Gumdrop to his workshop. There he repaired the big-end, removed the wings and lamps to make Gumdrop lighter, and painted the car yellow with green stripes.

Next day he drove Gumdrop to Chartridge and entered in the Autocross Trophy Race. All the other cars were modern, small and light, and they raced each other round the rough grass track. When Rocky's turn came, Gumdrop slithered and skidded and skipped round the wet grass as fast as possible, but the other cars slithered and skidded round faster still.

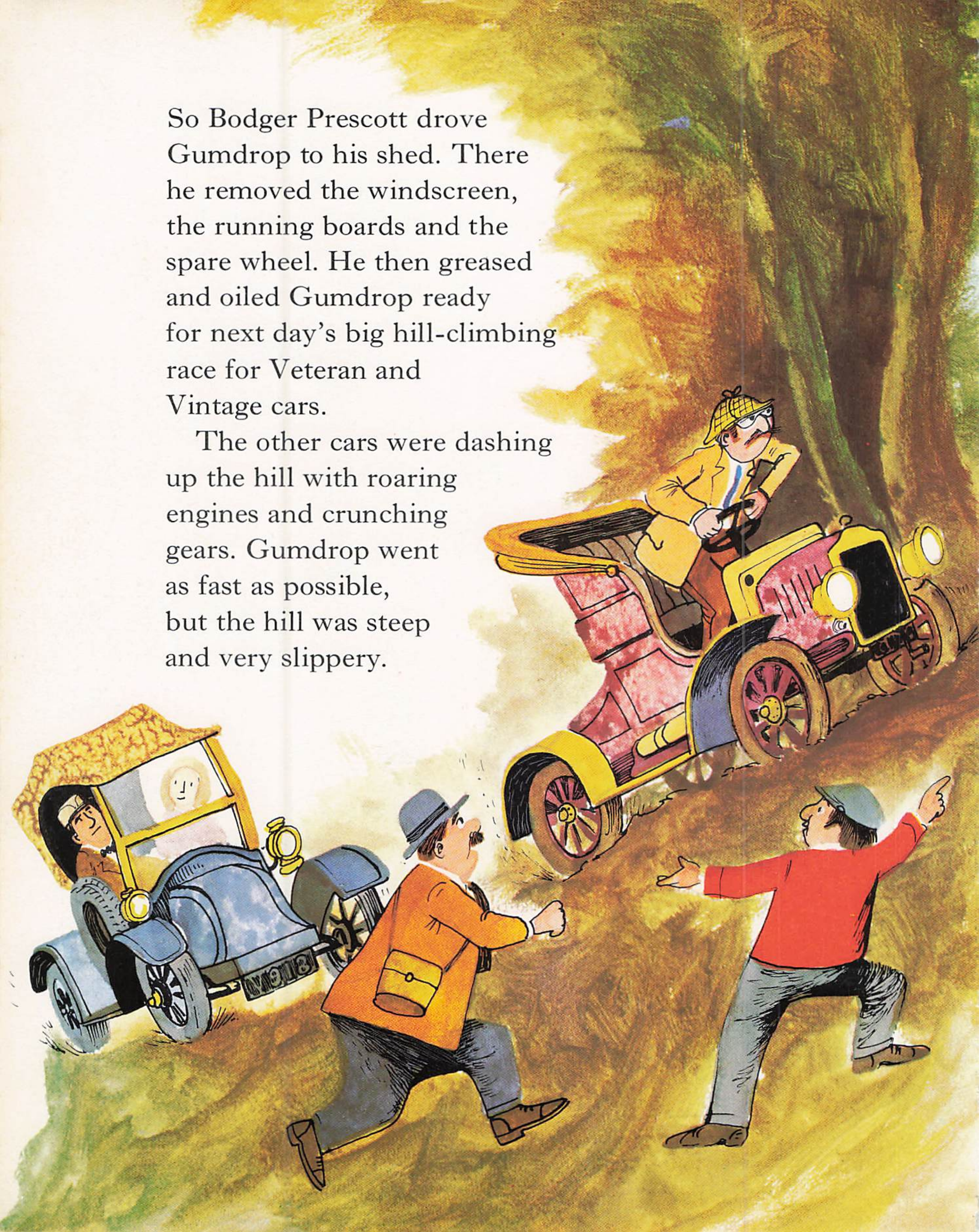
Suddenly Gumdrop lurched forward, spun round and stopped. "My wheel has come off!" cried Rocky. "I'm out of the race!" He was very disappointed.



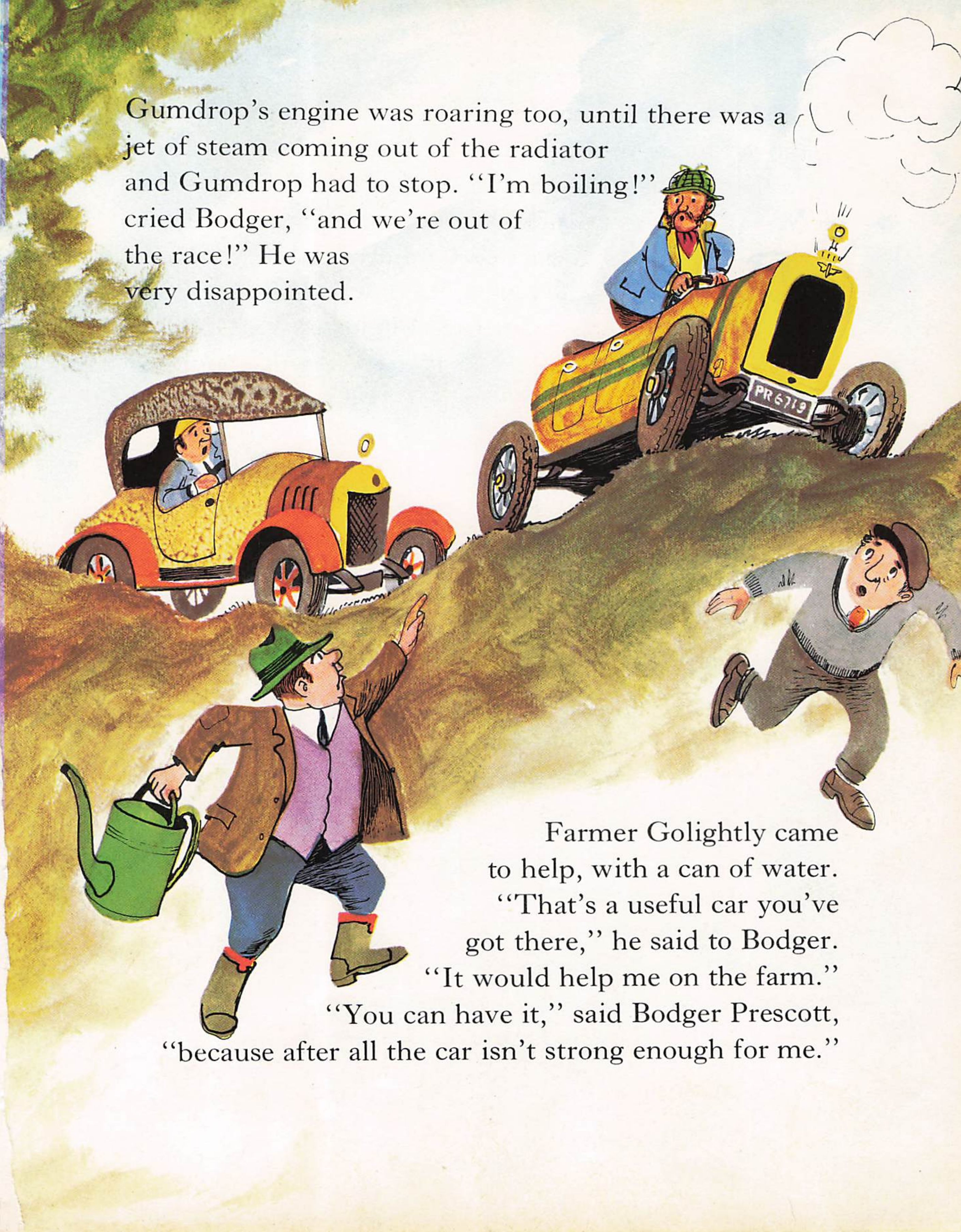
Bodger Prescott came to help with the wheel. "Will you sell me your car?" he asked. "I want to race it at the Ivinghoe hill-climb." "I will that," said Rocky Basher, "because after all the car isn't light enough for me."

So Bodger Prescott drove Gumdrop to his shed. There he removed the windscreen, the running boards and the spare wheel. He then greased and oiled Gumdrop ready for next day's big hill-climbing race for Veteran and Vintage cars.

The other cars were dashing up the hill with roaring engines and crunching gears. Gumdrop went as fast as possible, but the hill was steep and very slippery.

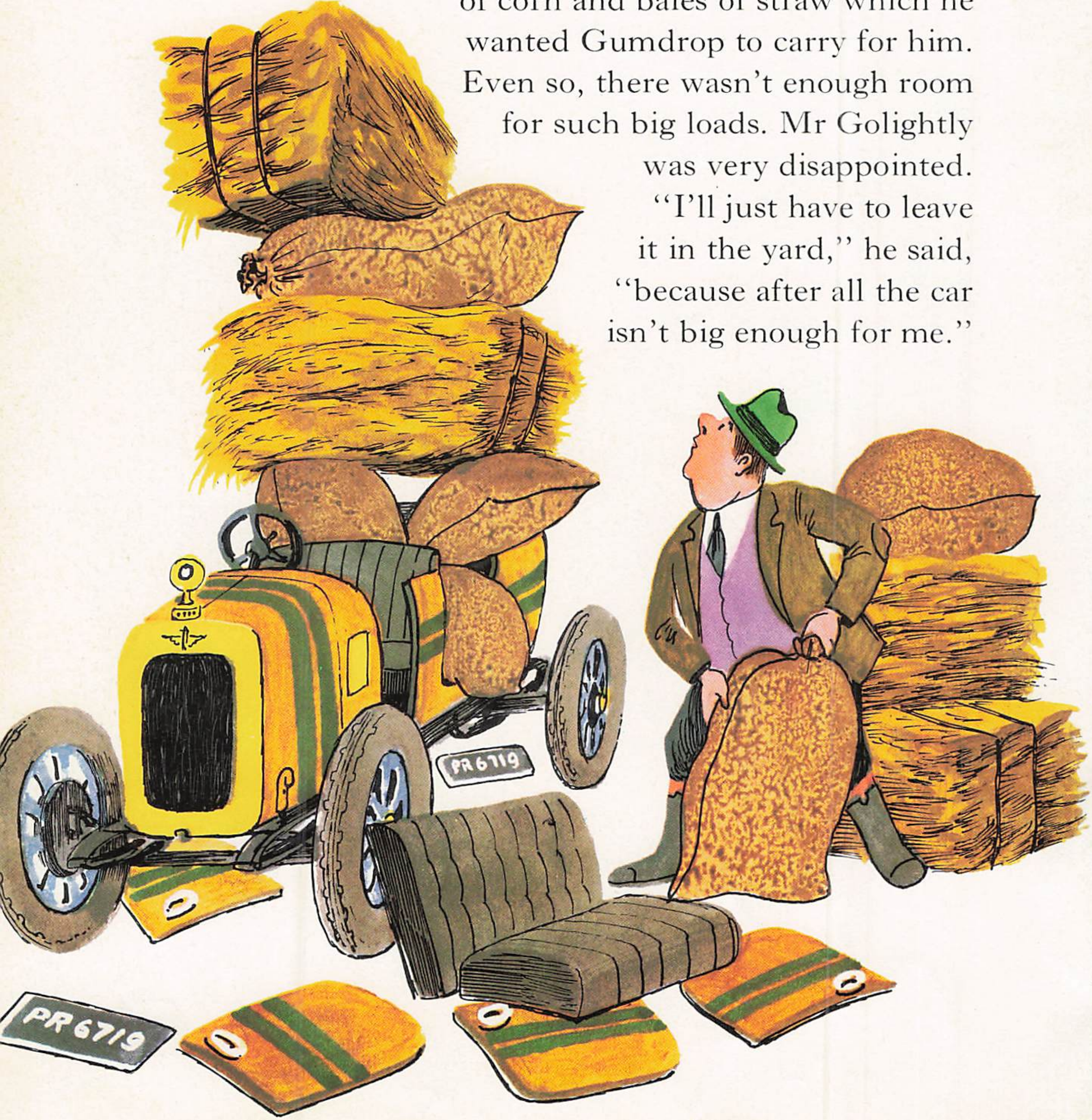


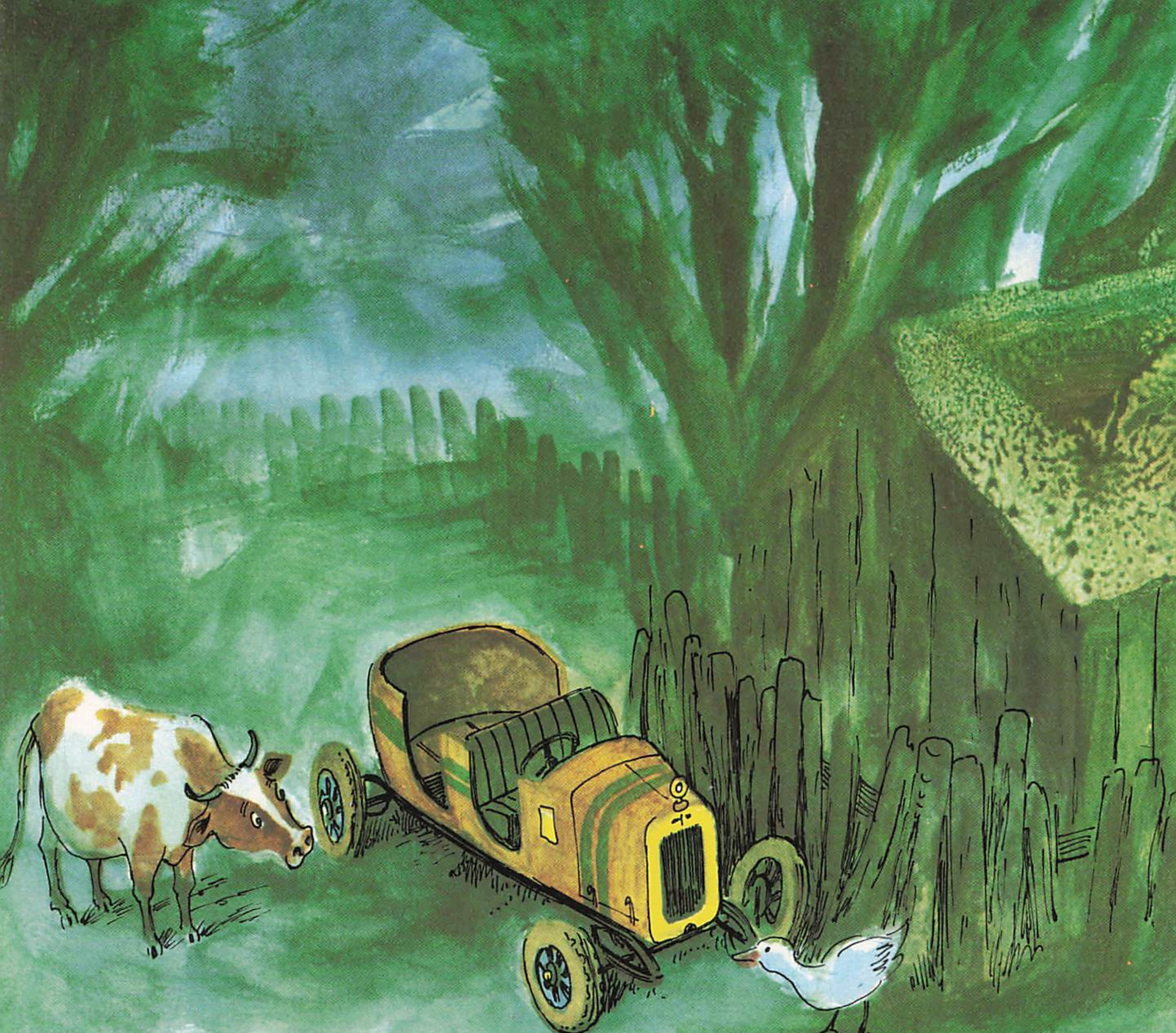
Gumdrop's engine was roaring too, until there was a jet of steam coming out of the radiator and Gumdrop had to stop. "I'm boiling!" cried Bodger, "and we're out of the race!" He was very disappointed.



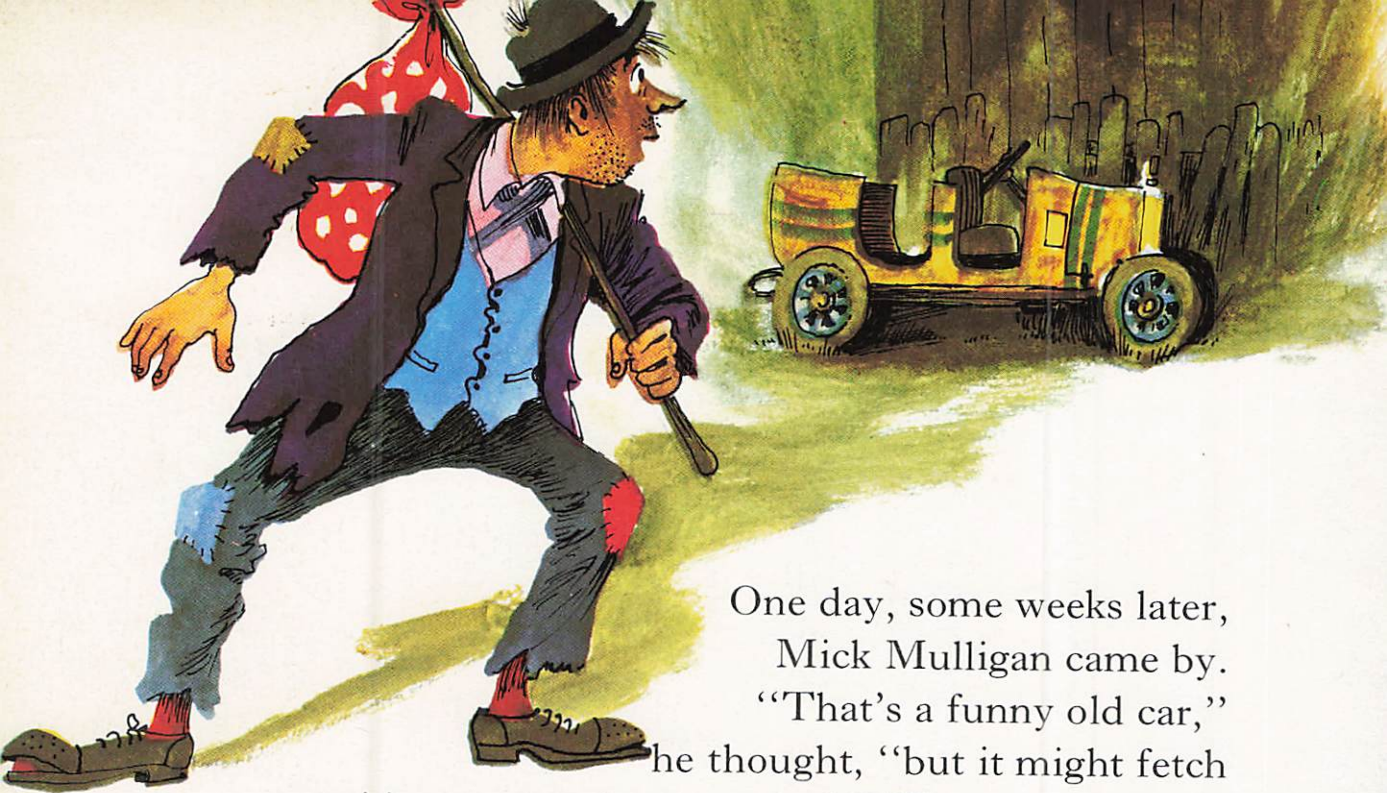
Farmer Golightly came to help, with a can of water. "That's a useful car you've got there," he said to Bodger. "It would help me on the farm." "You can have it," said Bodger Prescott, "because after all the car isn't strong enough for me."

So Mr Golightly drove Gumdrop to his farm. There he removed the number-plates, the doors and the back seat, so that there would be more room for the sacks of corn and bales of straw which he wanted Gumdrop to carry for him. Even so, there wasn't enough room for such big loads. Mr Golightly was very disappointed. "I'll just have to leave it in the yard," he said, "because after all the car isn't big enough for me."

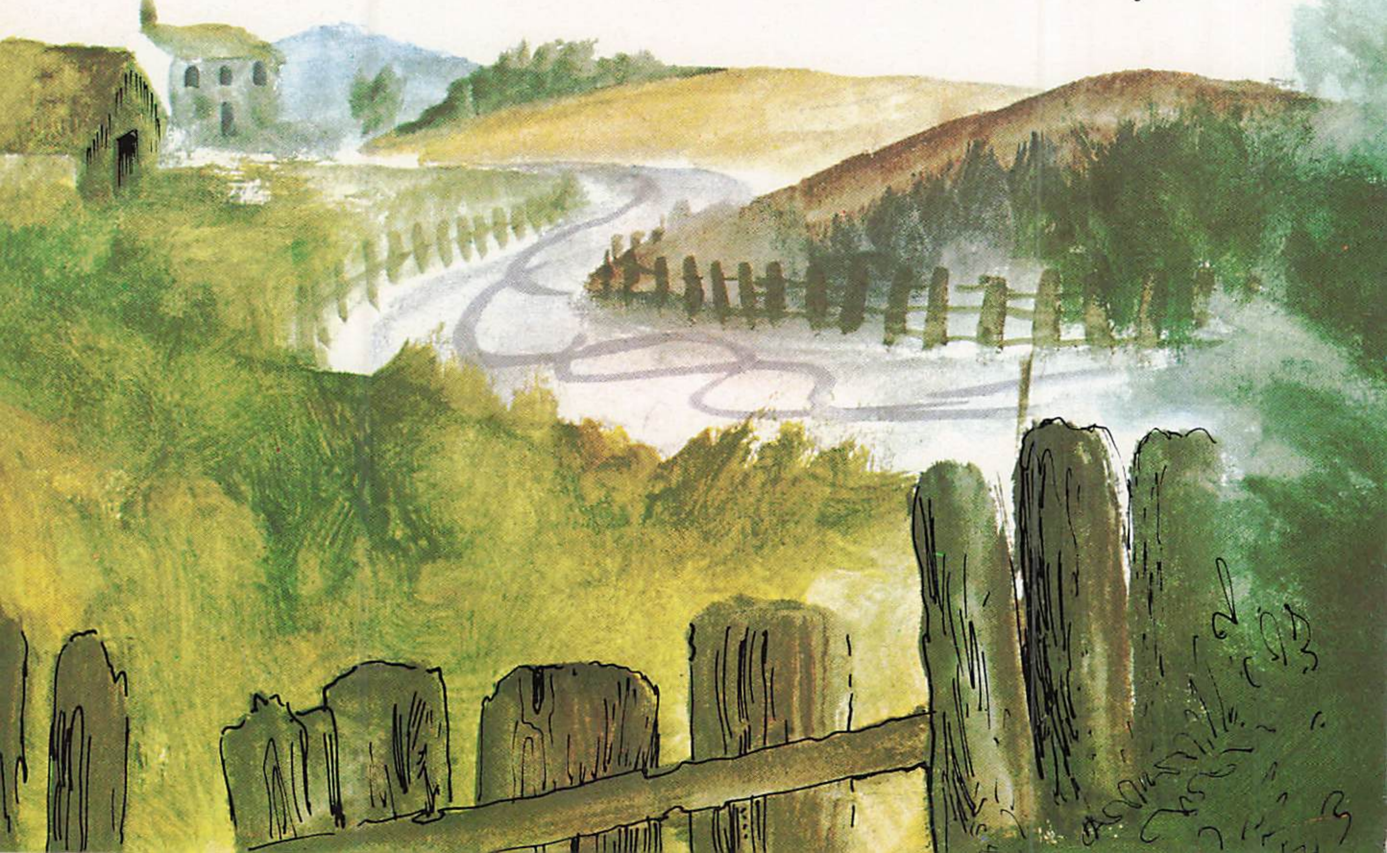




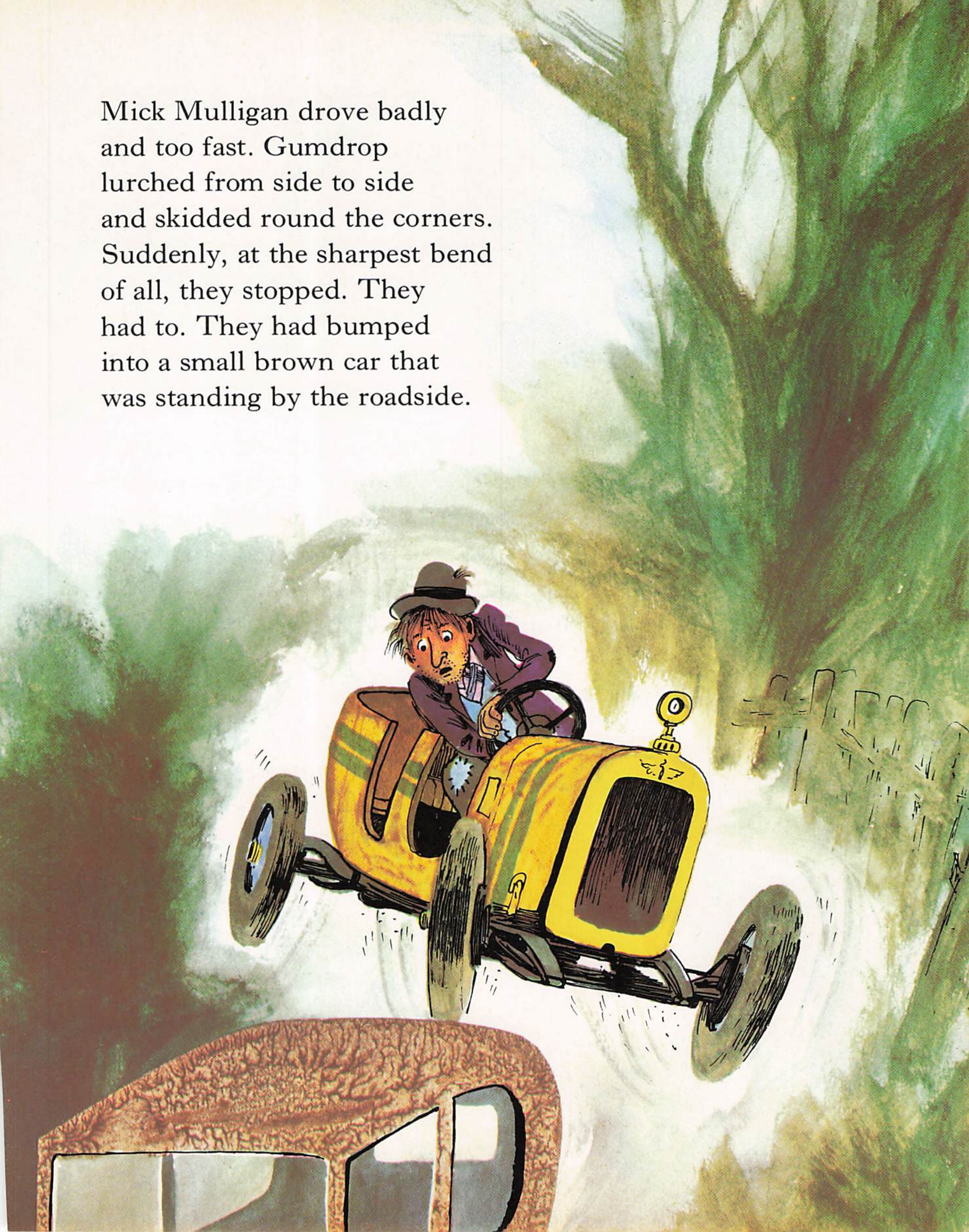
So Gumdrop stayed in the farmyard. Without a hood and a horn, without lamps and wings, windscreen or running-boards, with no spare wheel, number-plates, back seat or doors, and painted yellow with green stripes, Gumdrop was a strange and sorry sight.

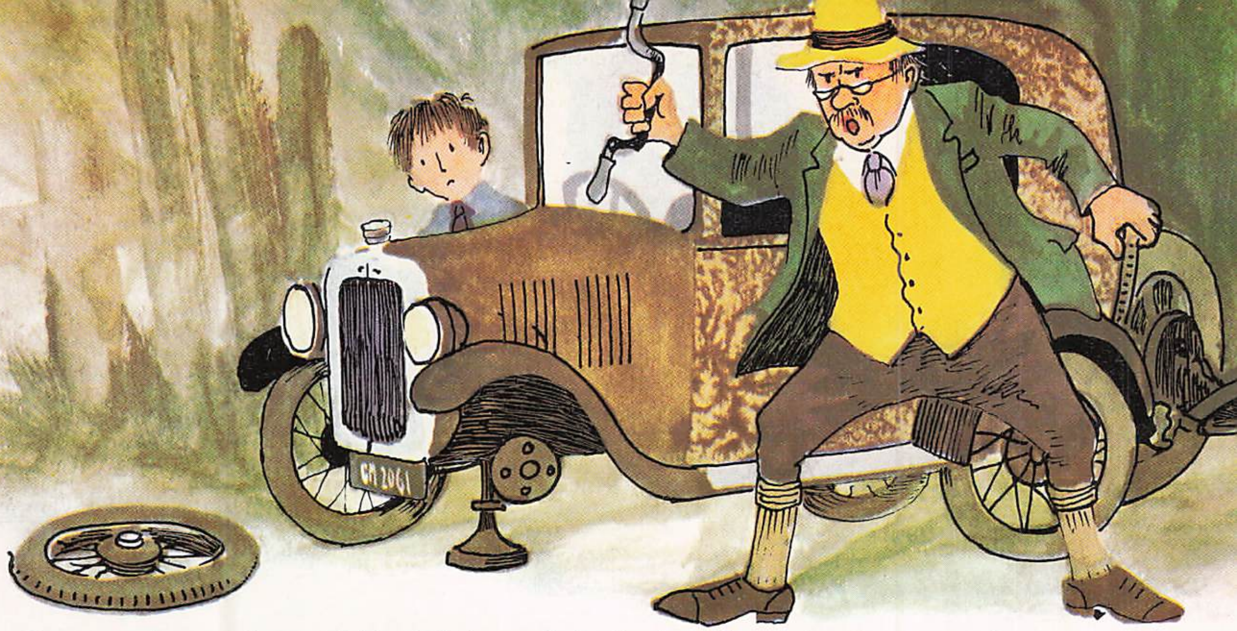


One day, some weeks later, Mick Mulligan came by. "That's a funny old car," he thought, "but it might fetch a quid or two at the scrapyard." There was nobody around, so he quickly jumped into Gumdrop, started the engine and drove out of the yard.



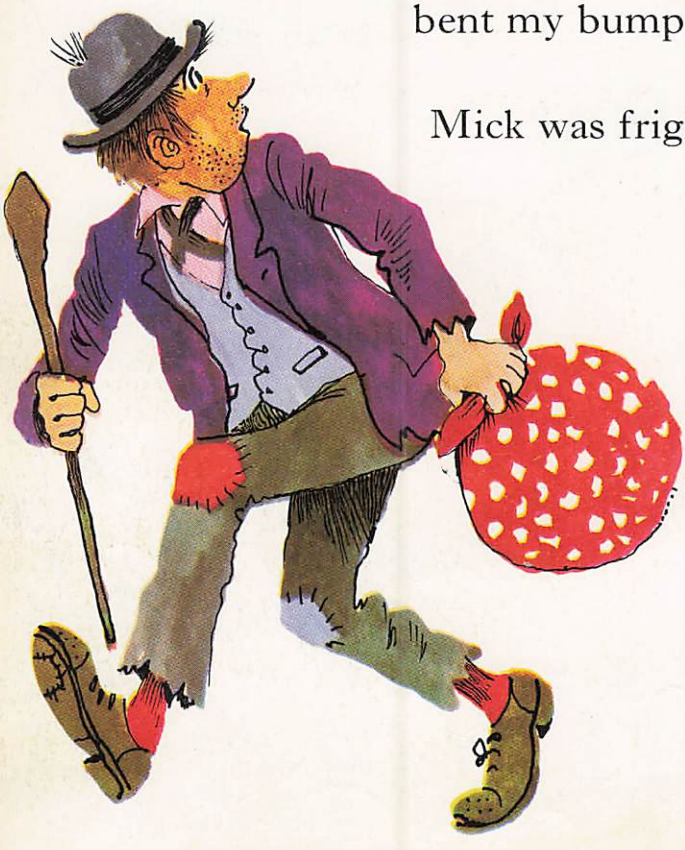
Mick Mulligan drove badly and too fast. Gumdrop lurched from side to side and skidded round the corners. Suddenly, at the sharpest bend of all, they stopped. They had to. They had bumped into a small brown car that was standing by the roadside.

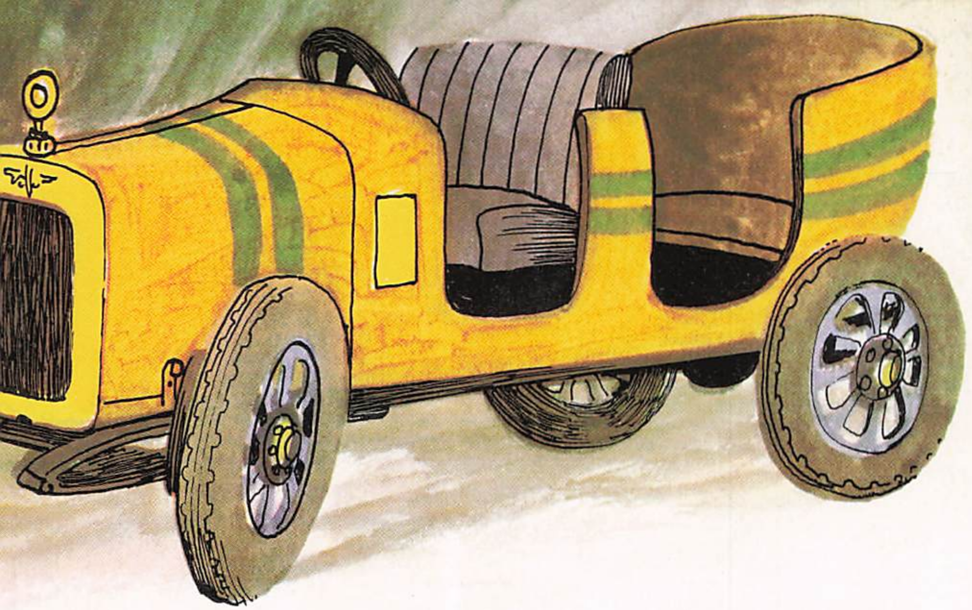




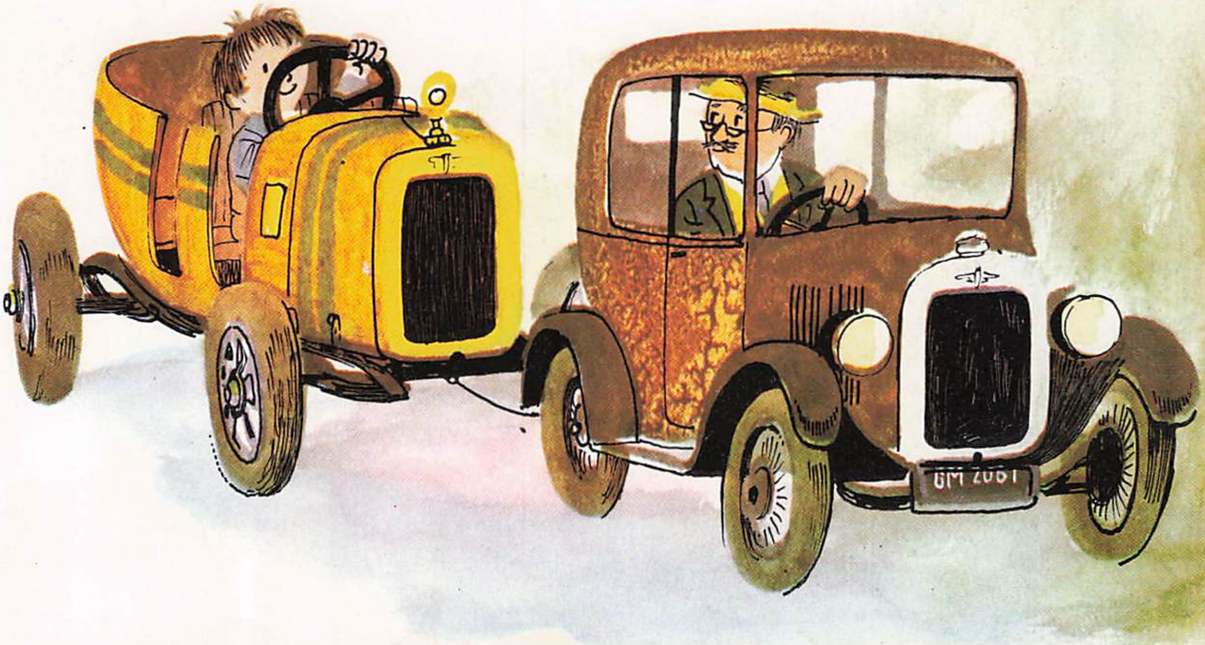
It was Araminta, Mr Oldcastle's baby Austin Seven of 1934. Mr Oldcastle was there himself, trying to mend a puncture, and he was very angry. "Look where you're going, you unmitigated blundering nincompoop!" he shouted at Mick Mulligan. "You've bent my bumper and nearly had me over too!"

Mick was frightened. "I'm that sorry, sir," he stammered, "but I can't pay for the damage I've done to your car. Tell you what," he added, "you can have this old heap instead!" Without waiting for a reply, he jumped over the fence and ran away. After all, Gumdrop wasn't nearly valuable enough for him.

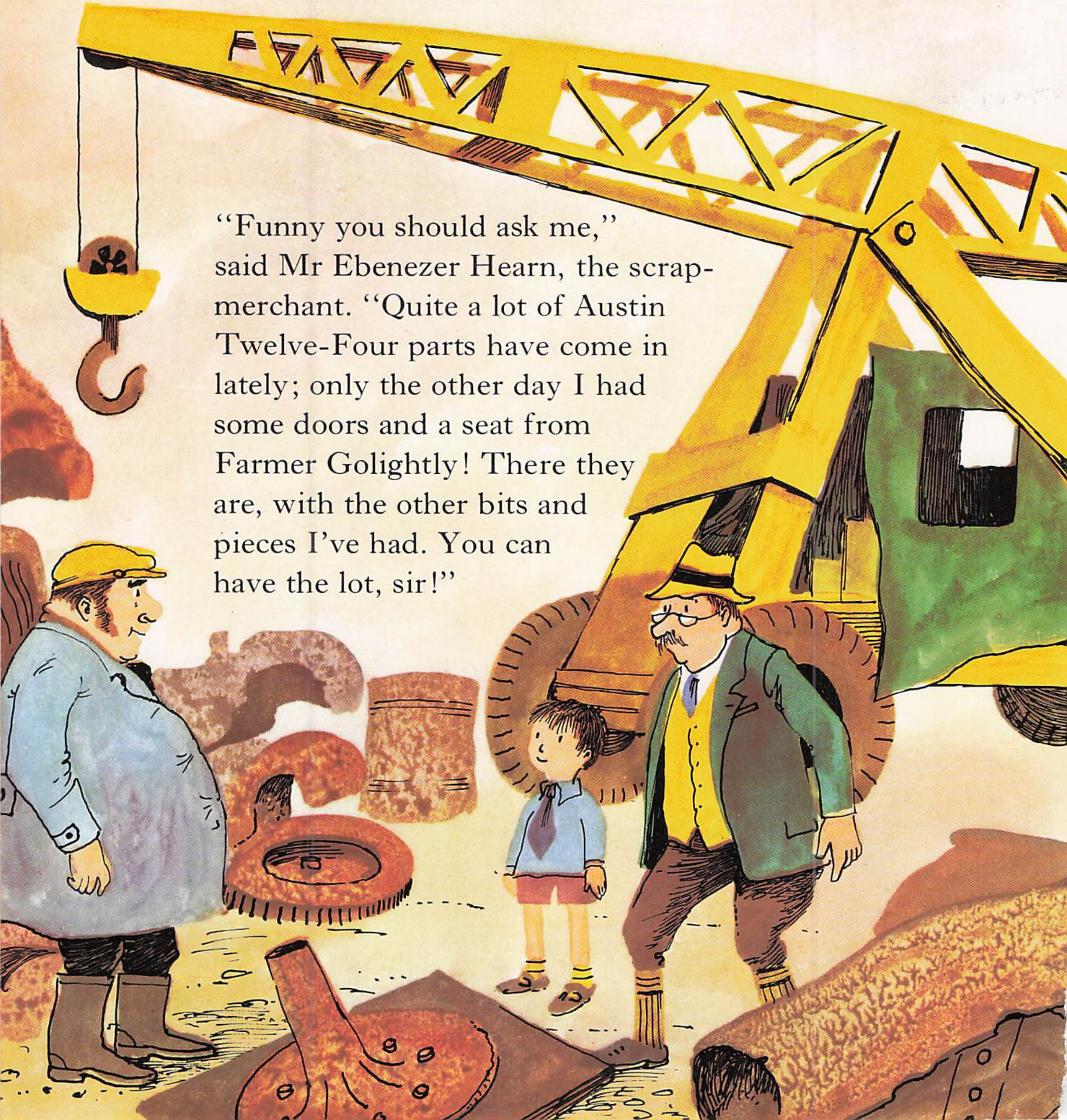




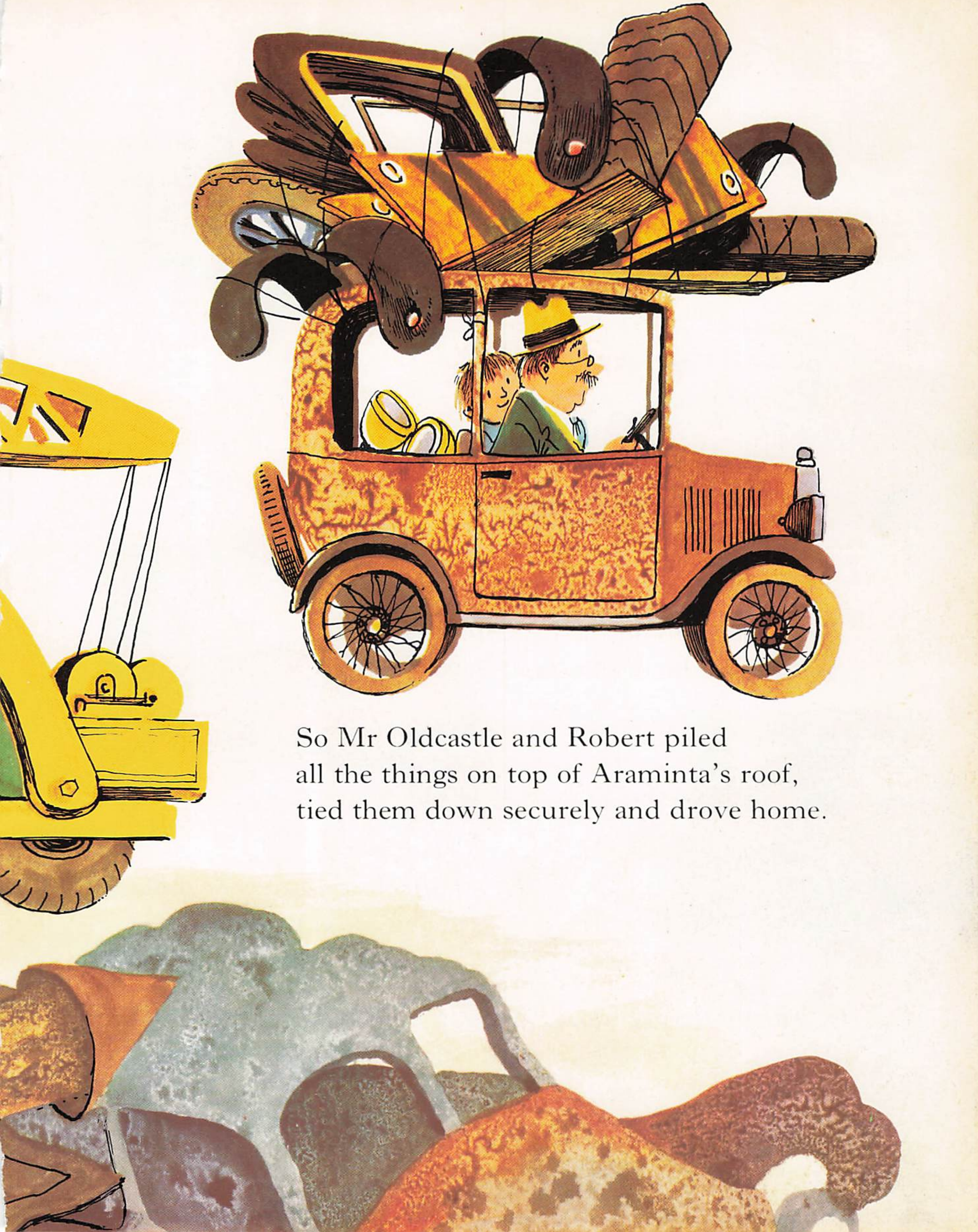
Mr Oldcastle looked at Gumdrop, but did not recognize it. "Odd-looking machine," he said, "though it is an Austin Heavy Twelve-Four right enough, and I could restore it. It would be grand to have another vintage Austin again." And so he hitched Gumdrop to Araminta and they drove home, with Robert steering Gumdrop.



Next day Mr Oldcastle and Robert drove to the scrapyard in search of the missing parts for Gumdrop. Old cars and bits and pieces were heaped up everywhere.

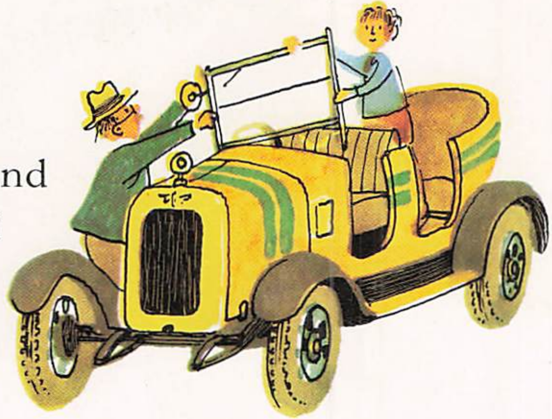


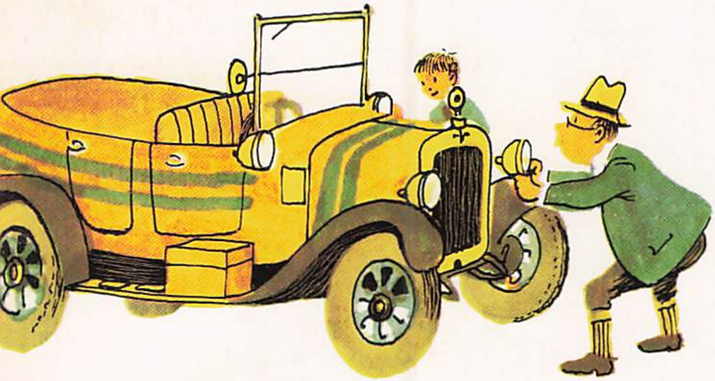
"Funny you should ask me," said Mr Ebenezer Hearn, the scrap-merchant. "Quite a lot of Austin Twelve-Four parts have come in lately; only the other day I had some doors and a seat from Farmer Golightly! There they are, with the other bits and pieces I've had. You can have the lot, sir!"



So Mr Oldcastle and Robert piled
all the things on top of Araminta's roof,
tied them down securely and drove home.

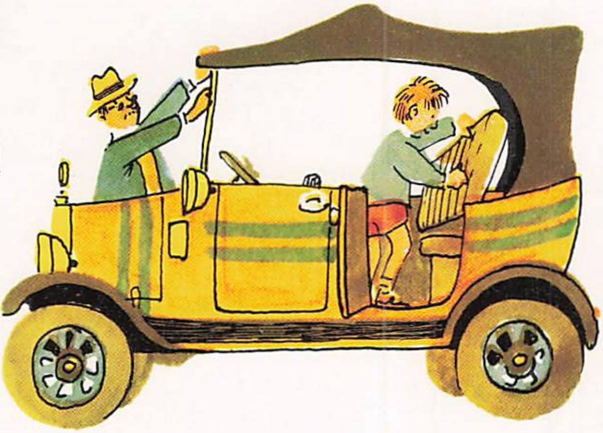
So the restoration began.
They bolted back the wings and
running-boards, and replaced
the windscreen.

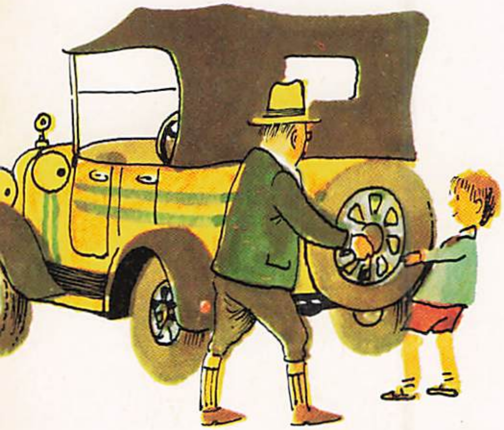




They screwed on the lamps
and hinged up the doors.

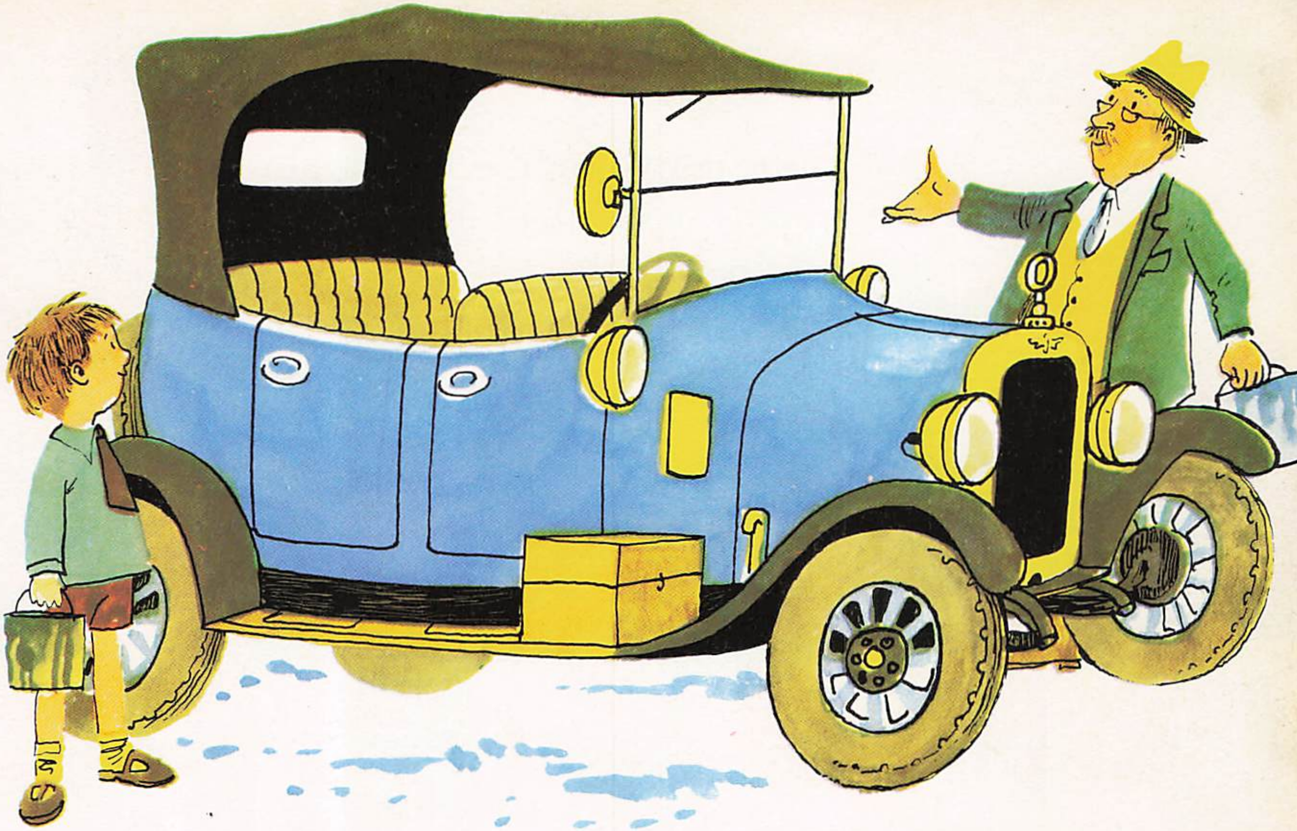
They clamped on the hood
and put in the back seat.





And they screwed the
spare wheel in place again.

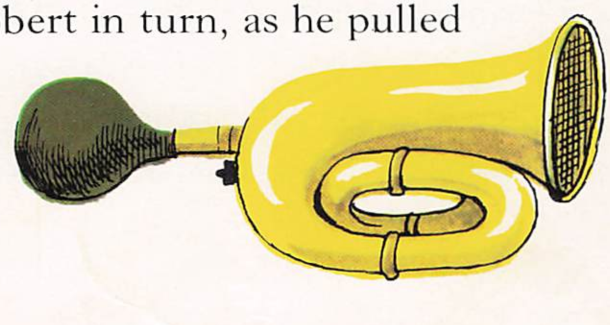
Finally they painted the body blue and the wings black.
After a week's hard work, the car looked as good as new.



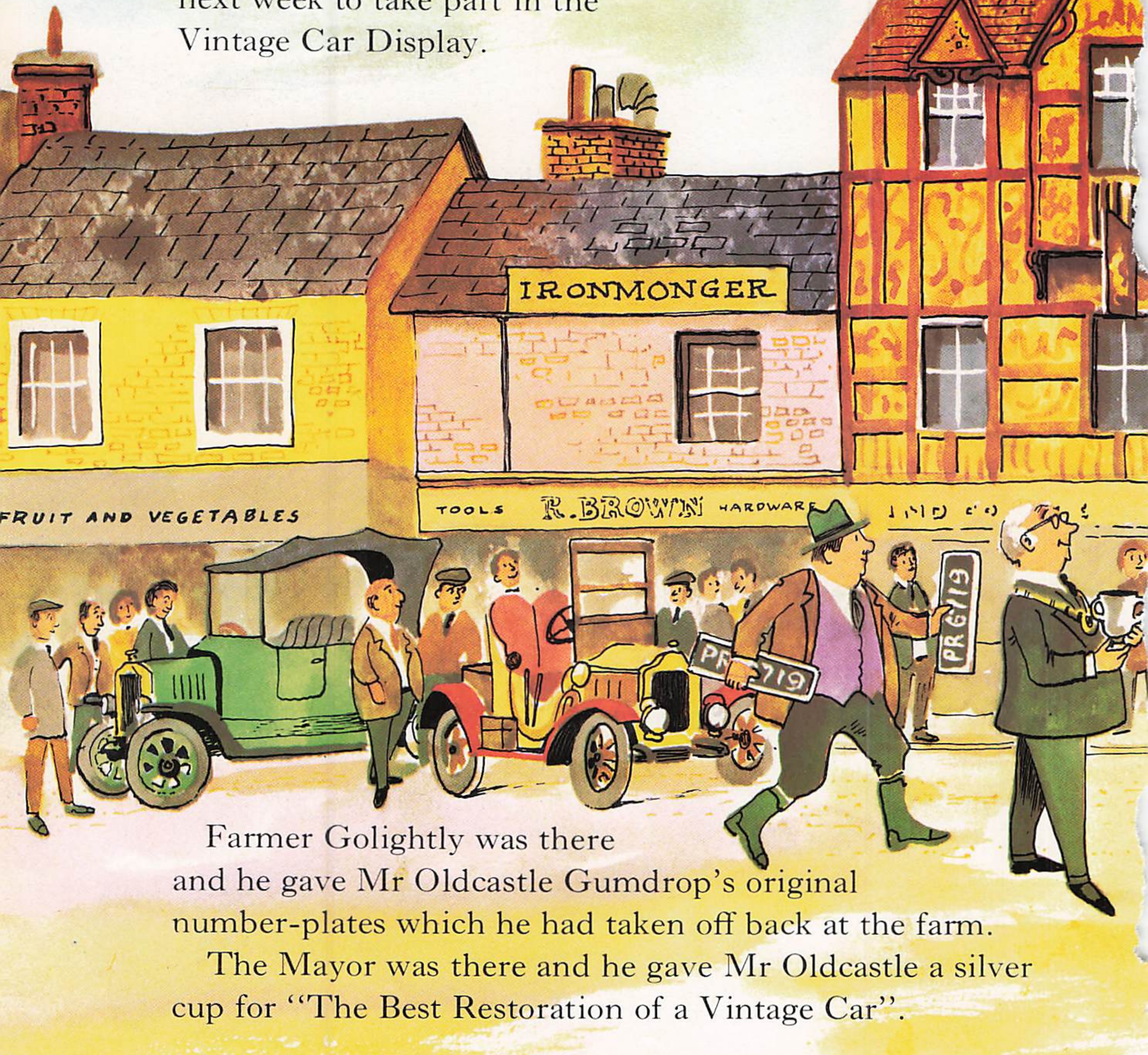
"It looks exactly like my old car now," said Mr Oldcastle, "though I wish that this car was actually Gumdrop itself!" Just then Robert was rummaging in the tool-box, while Mr Oldcastle polished the engine. "I wonder," he thought, "if after all . . ." He looked at the engine number. C.4478. "The same!!" he shouted. "The same number!!! This must actually be . . ."

"It IS! It IS!" shouted Robert in turn, as he pulled out the shiny brass horn.

"This is our own original
Gumdrop after all!!"

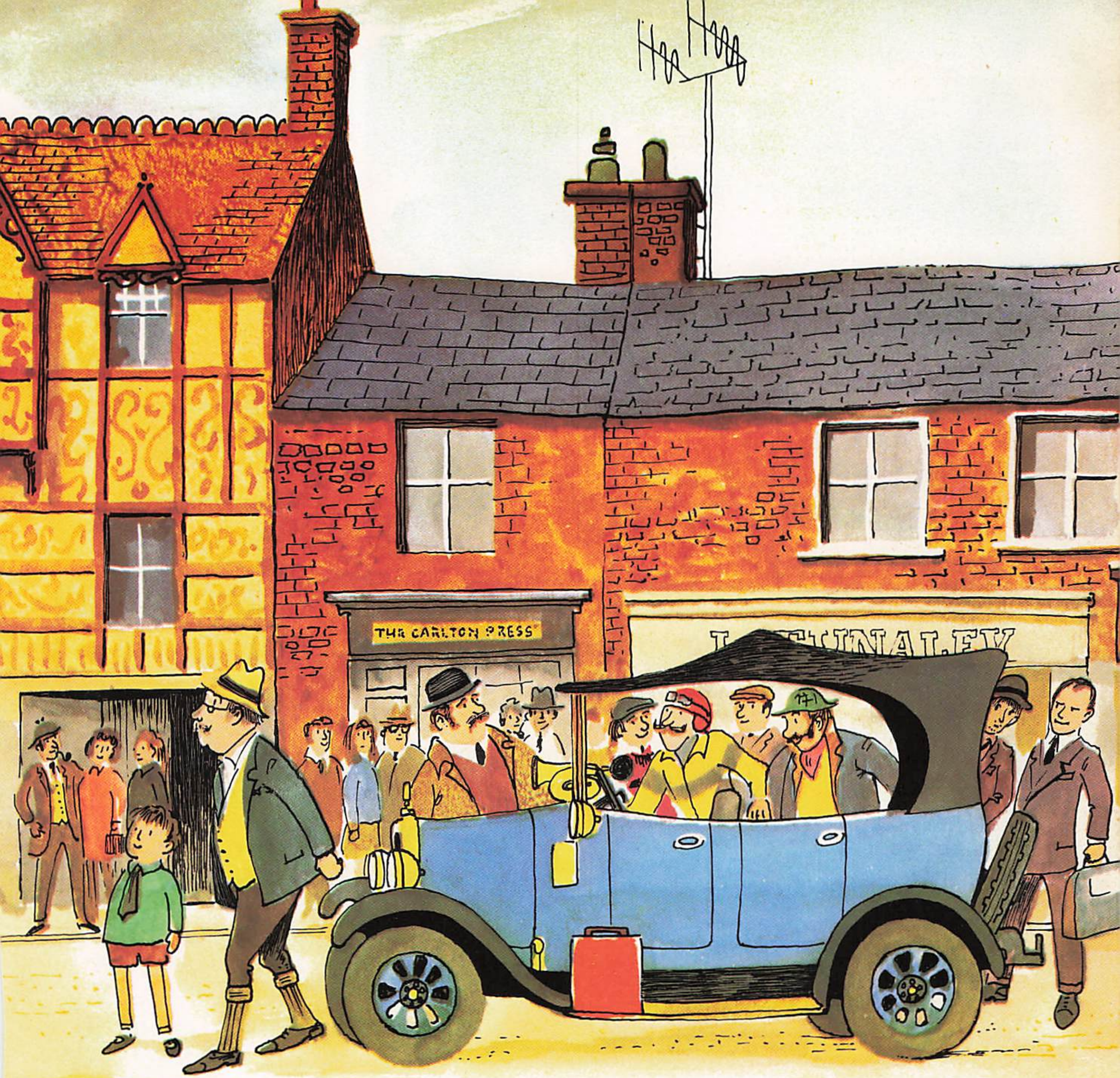


So Mr Oldcastle got Gumdrop back again.
They drove proudly to the town
next week to take part in the
Vintage Car Display.

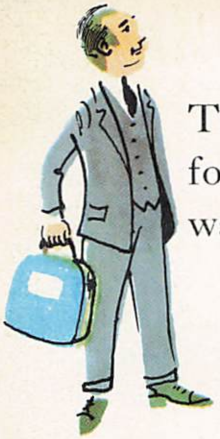

IRONMONGER
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES
TOOLS
R. BROWN
HARDWARE
PR 719
PR 6719

Farmer Golightly was there
and he gave Mr Oldcastle Gumdrop's original
number-plates which he had taken off back at the farm.

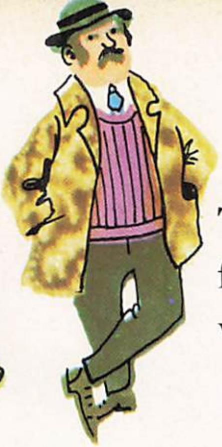
The Mayor was there and he gave Mr Oldcastle a silver
cup for "The Best Restoration of a Vintage Car".


THE CARLTON PRESS

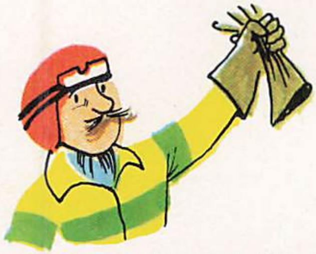
And there, too, were all the people who had owned Gumdrop since the Vintage Auction Sale. They came up to admire Gumdrop and to congratulate Mr Oldcastle.



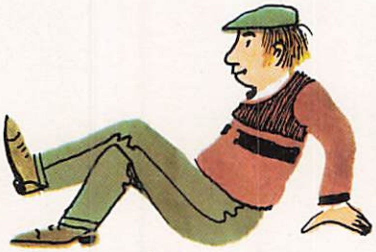
There was Mr O'Hara,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't rare enough.



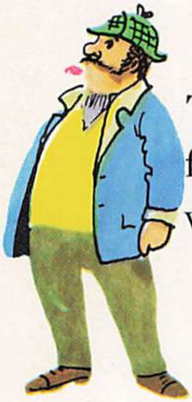
There was Mr Banger,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't smart enough.



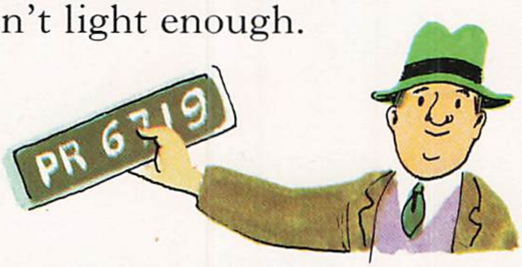
There was Archibald Gridline,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't fast enough.



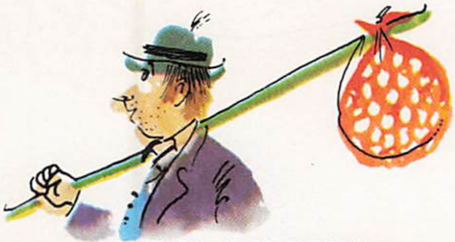
There was Rocky Basher,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't light enough.



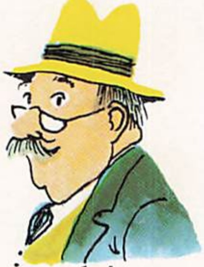
There was Bodger Prescott,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't strong enough.



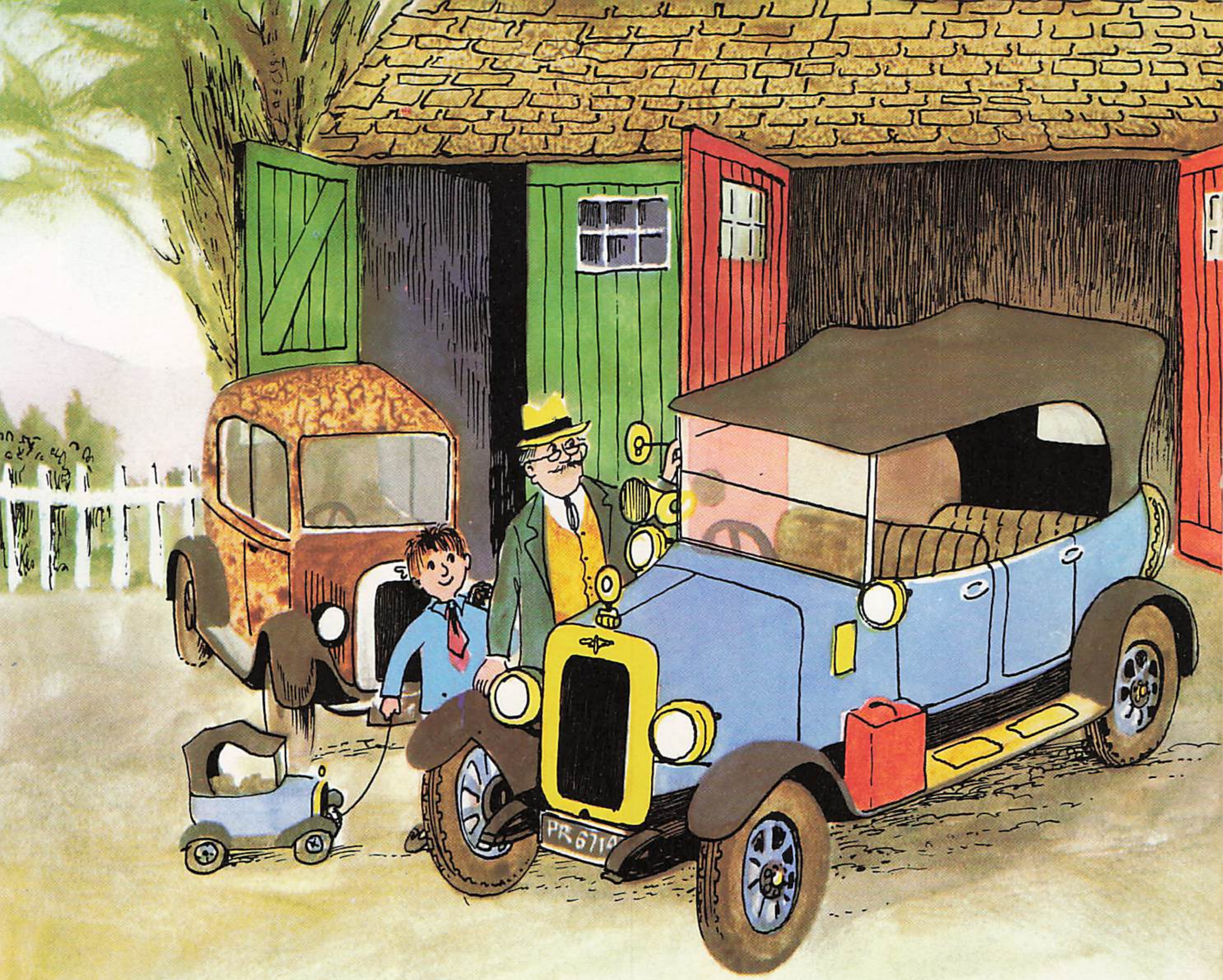
There was Farmer Golightly,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't big enough.



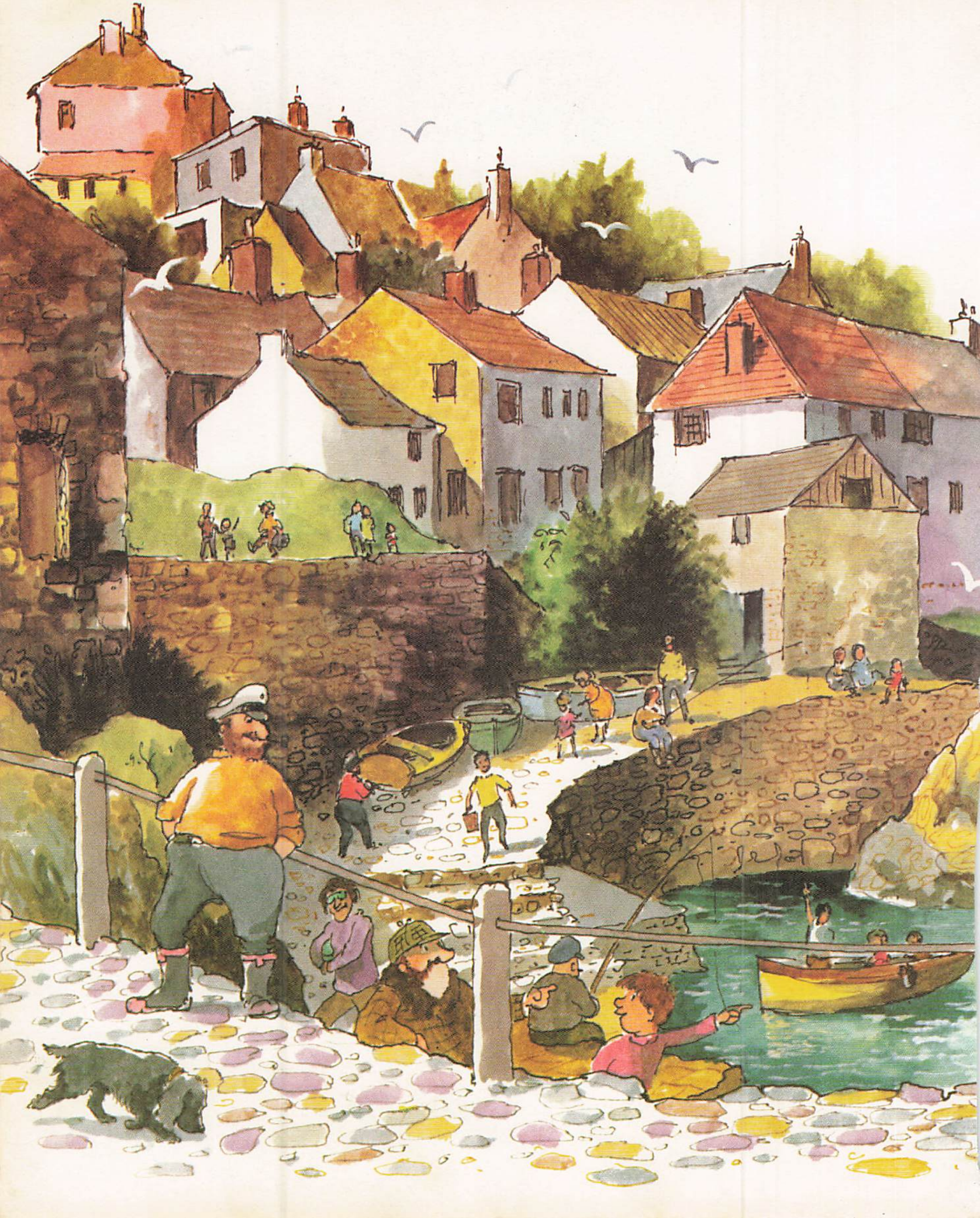
There was Mick Mulligan even,
for whom Gumdrop
wasn't valuable enough.



And finally, there was Mr Josiah Oldcastle, who got his old car back and would keep it for ever. For him Gumdrop was certainly more than good enough.

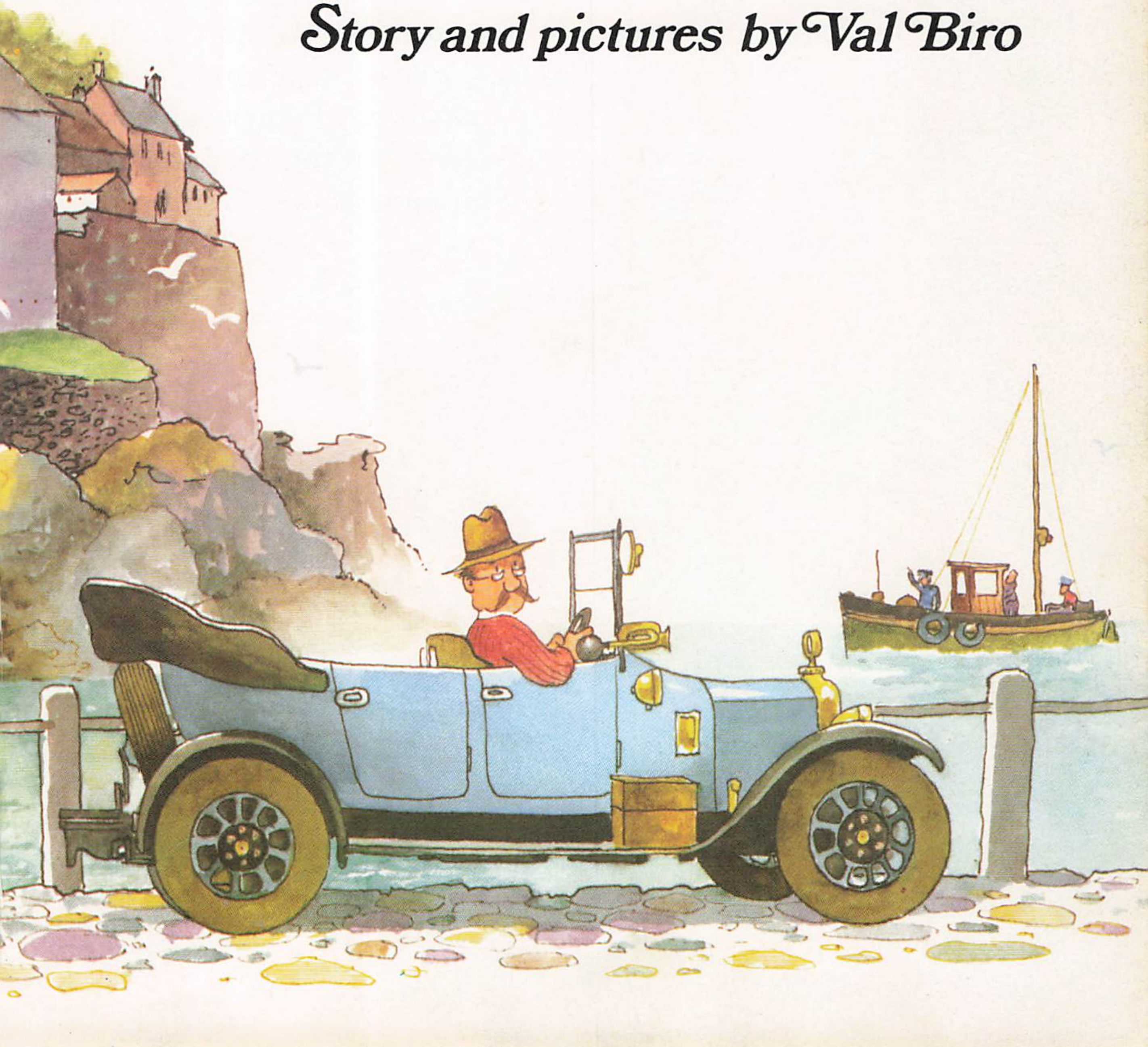


Gumdrop on the Move
Text and illustrations copyright © 1969 Val Biro



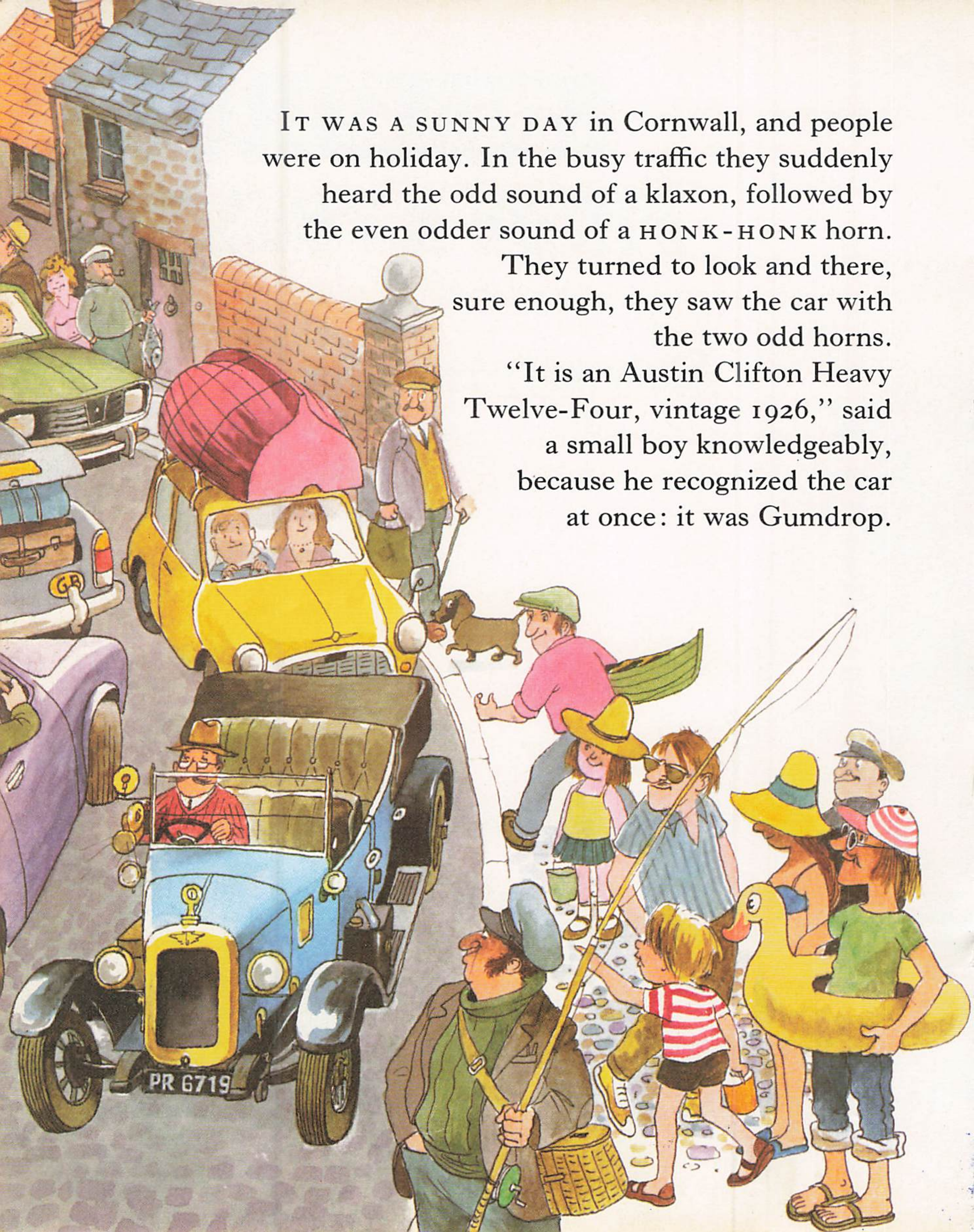
GUMDROP FINDS A FRIEND

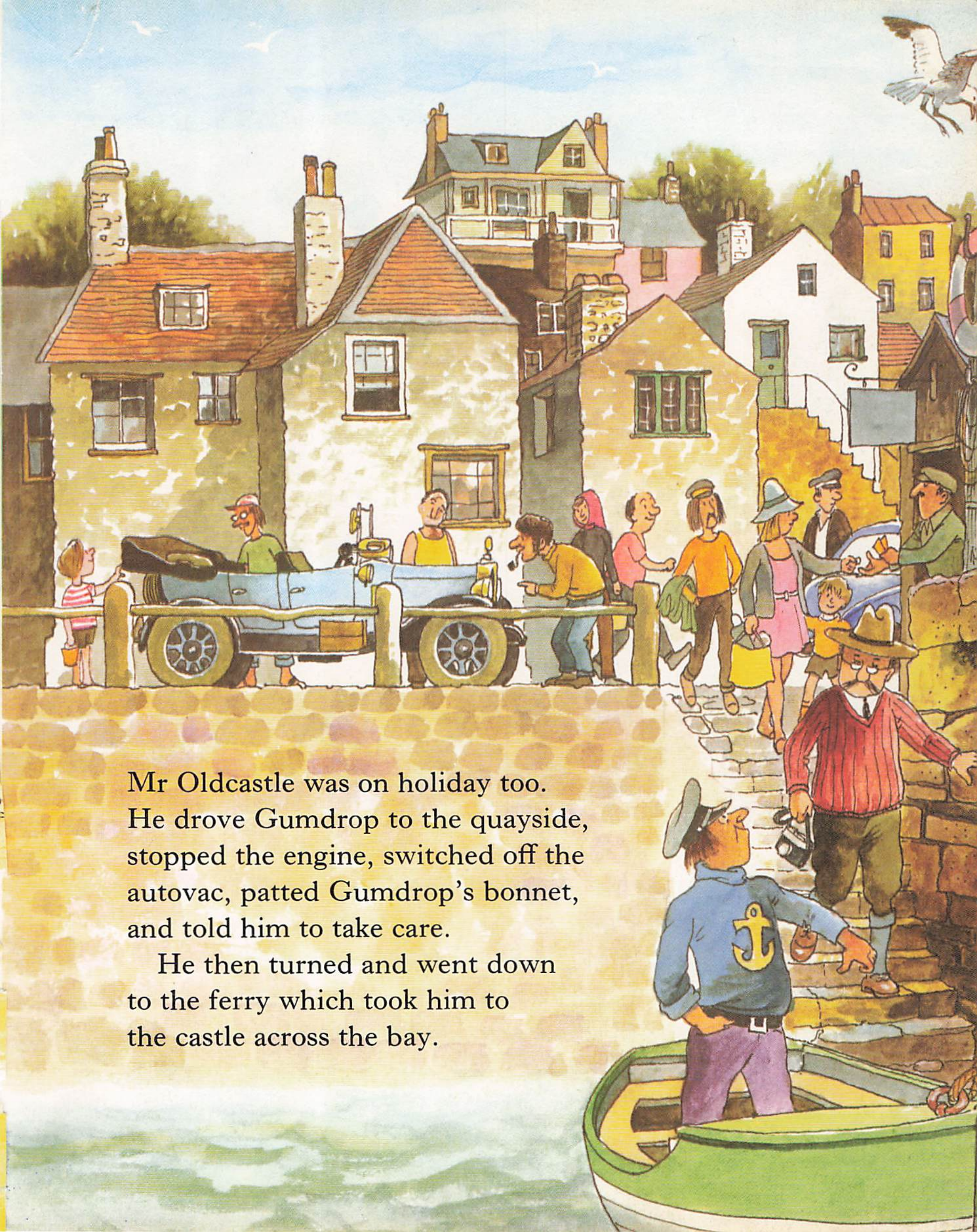
Story and pictures by Val Biro



IT WAS A SUNNY DAY in Cornwall, and people were on holiday. In the busy traffic they suddenly heard the odd sound of a klaxon, followed by the even odder sound of a HONK-HONK horn. They turned to look and there, sure enough, they saw the car with the two odd horns.

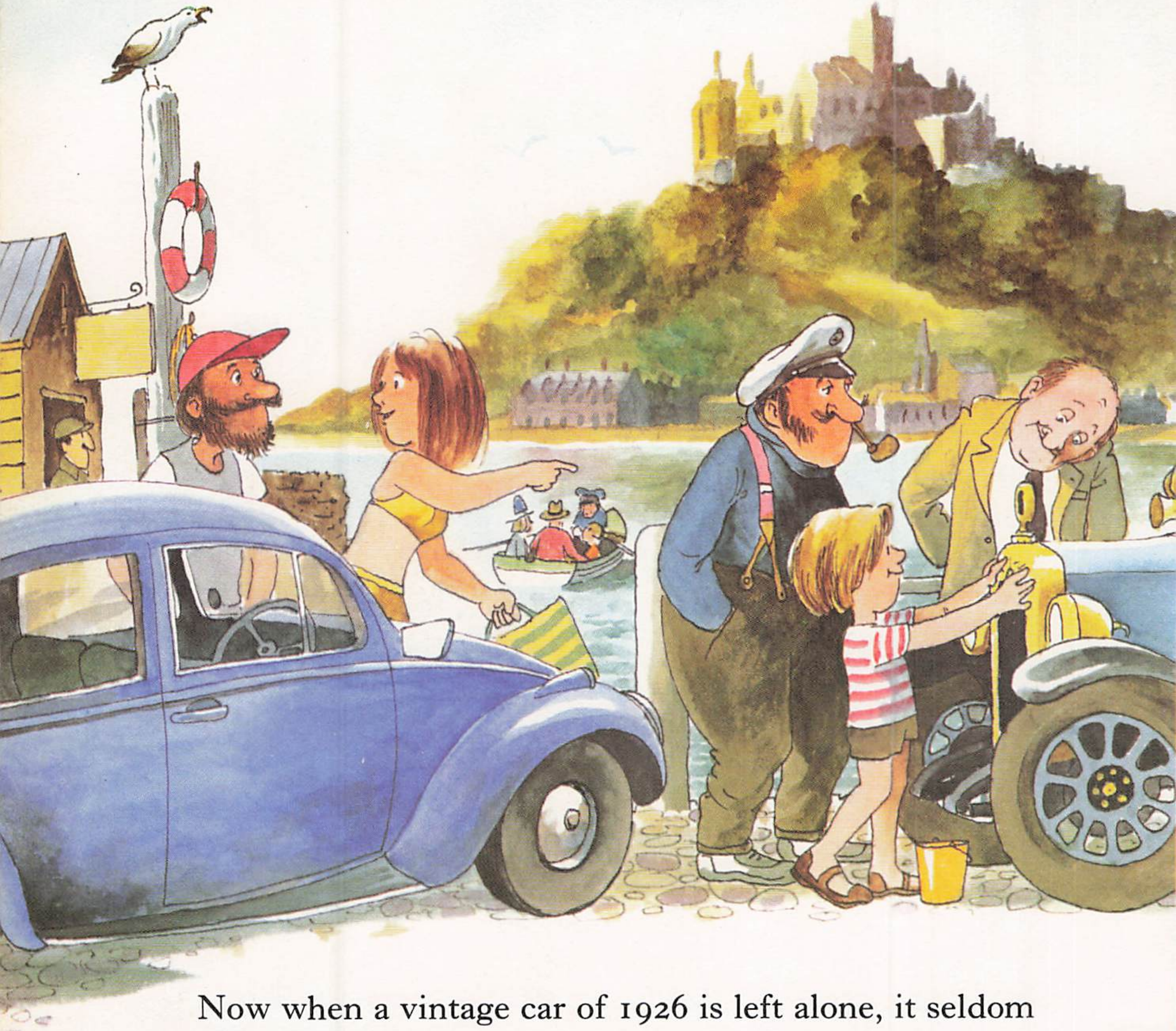
"It is an Austin Clifton Heavy Twelve-Four, vintage 1926," said a small boy knowledgeably, because he recognized the car at once: it was Gumdrop.



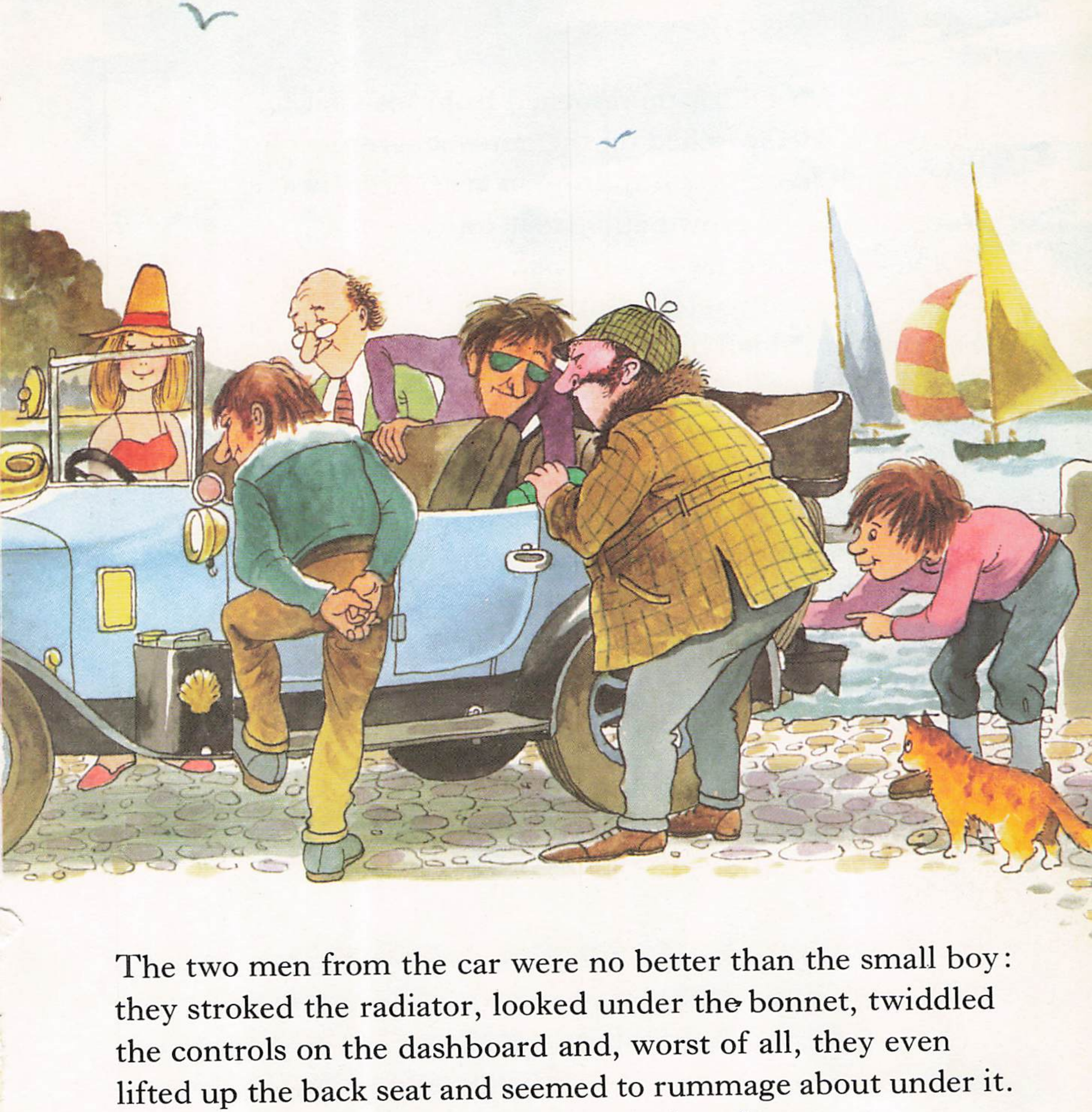


Mr Oldcastle was on holiday too. He drove Gumdrop to the quayside, stopped the engine, switched off the autovac, patted Gumdrop's bonnet, and told him to take care.

He then turned and went down to the ferry which took him to the castle across the bay.



Now when a vintage car of 1926 is left alone, it seldom stays alone for long. People soon come to admire it (as they came now), children keep touching the shiny brass with their sticky hands (like that small boy), and even other cars stop to have a better look (as this car has just done).

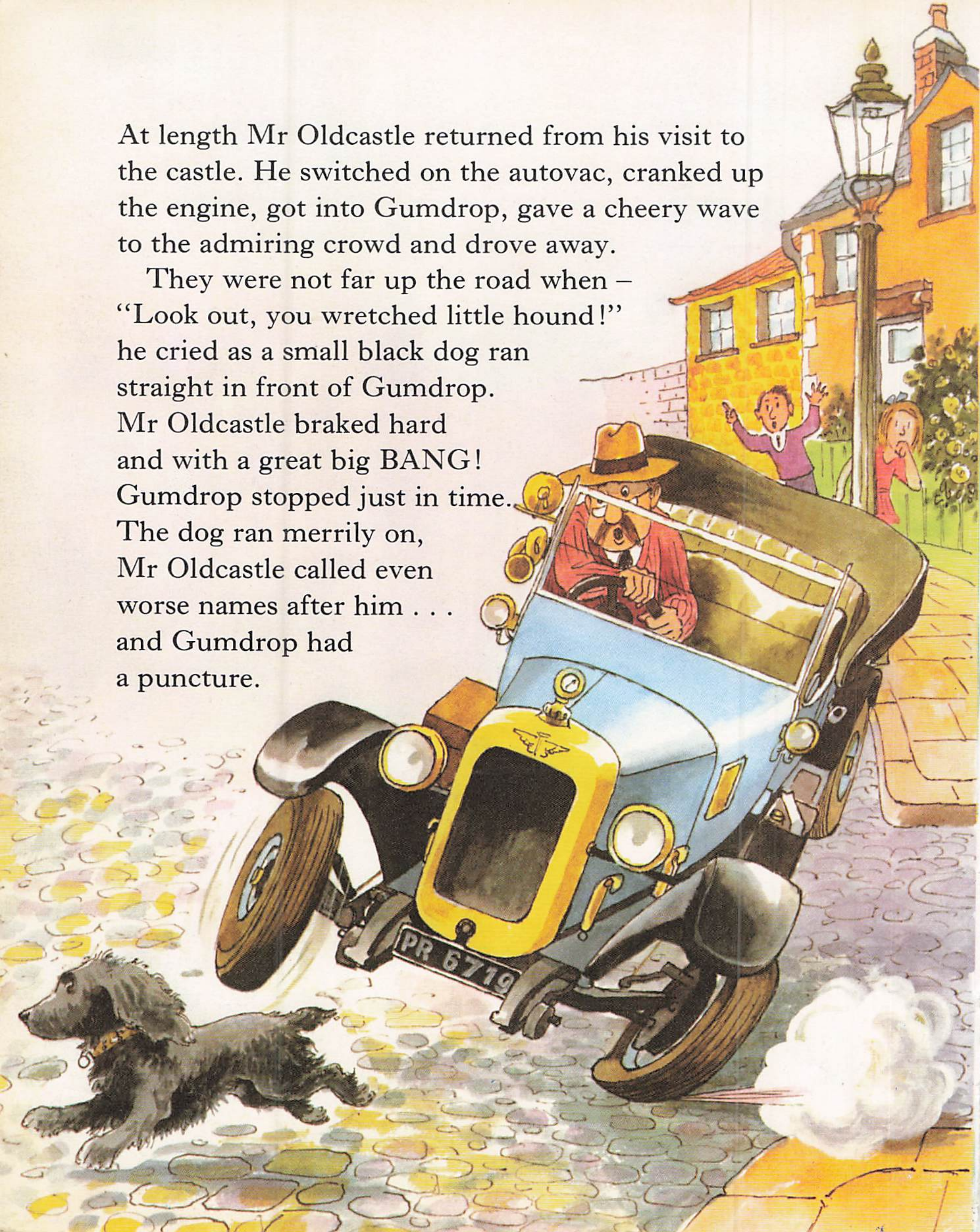


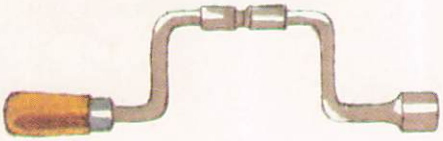
The two men from the car were no better than the small boy: they stroked the radiator, looked under the bonnet, twiddled the controls on the dashboard and, worst of all, they even lifted up the back seat and seemed to rummage about under it.

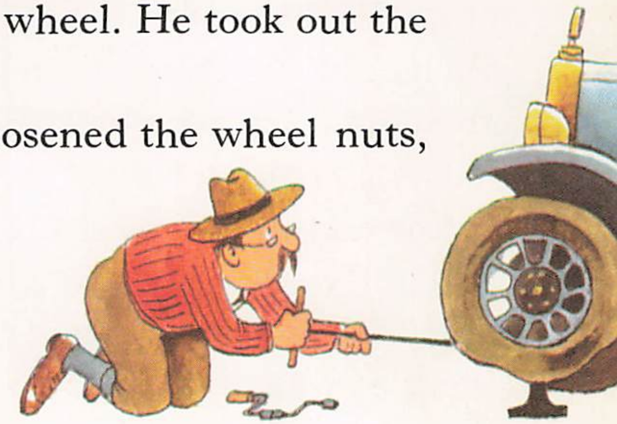
Really, there is no end to the curiosity of eager vintage car enthusiasts!

At length Mr Oldcastle returned from his visit to the castle. He switched on the autovac, cranked up the engine, got into Gumdrop, gave a cheery wave to the admiring crowd and drove away.

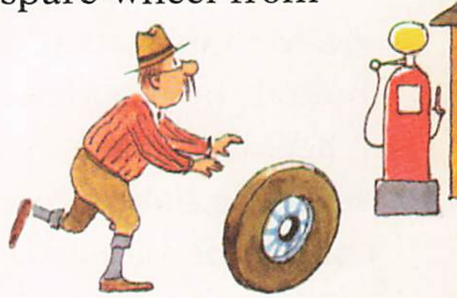
They were not far up the road when – "Look out, you wretched little hound!" he cried as a small black dog ran straight in front of Gumdrop. Mr Oldcastle braked hard and with a great big BANG! Gumdrop stopped just in time. The dog ran merrily on, Mr Oldcastle called even worse names after him . . . and Gumdrop had a puncture.



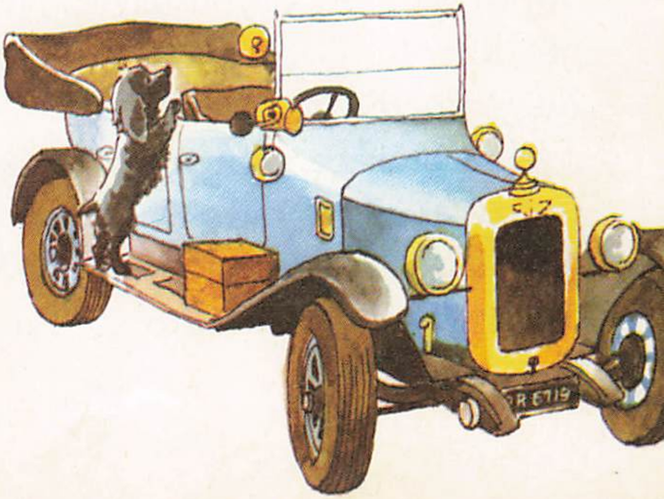
So Mr Oldcastle had to change his wheel. He took out the  wheelbrace, loosened the wheel nuts, put the jack under the axle, jacked up the car and removed the punctured wheel; he then unbolted the spare wheel from the back and fixed it securely to the hub.

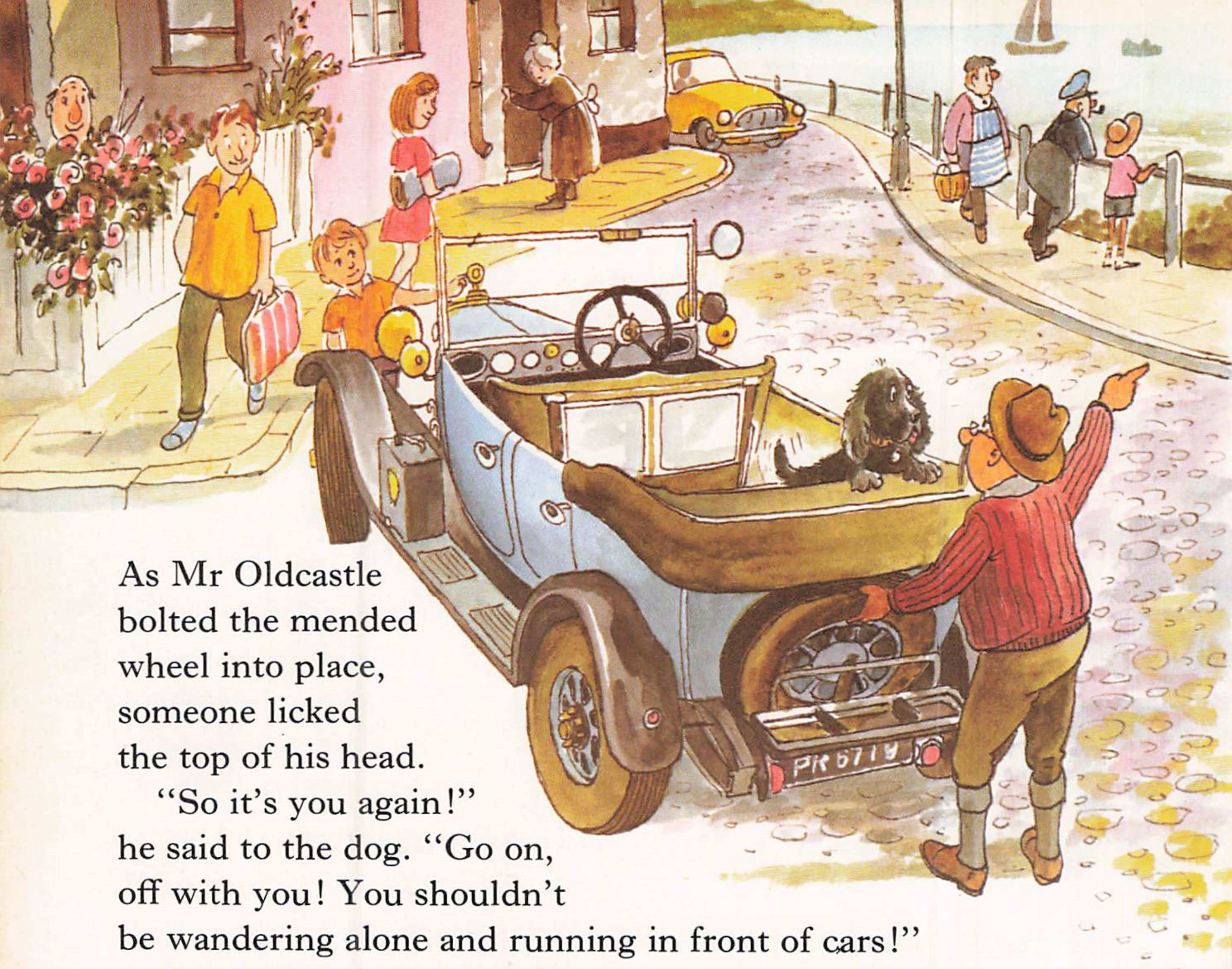


After removing the jack he rolled the punctured wheel to a garage for immediate repair.



Meanwhile, the little black dog returned, sniffed the car, liked what he sniffed, jumped on the running board, clambered over the back door, got into the seat and promptly went to sleep.





As Mr Oldcastle bolted the mended wheel into place, someone licked the top of his head.

"So it's you again!" he said to the dog. "Go on, off with you! You shouldn't be wandering alone and running in front of cars!"

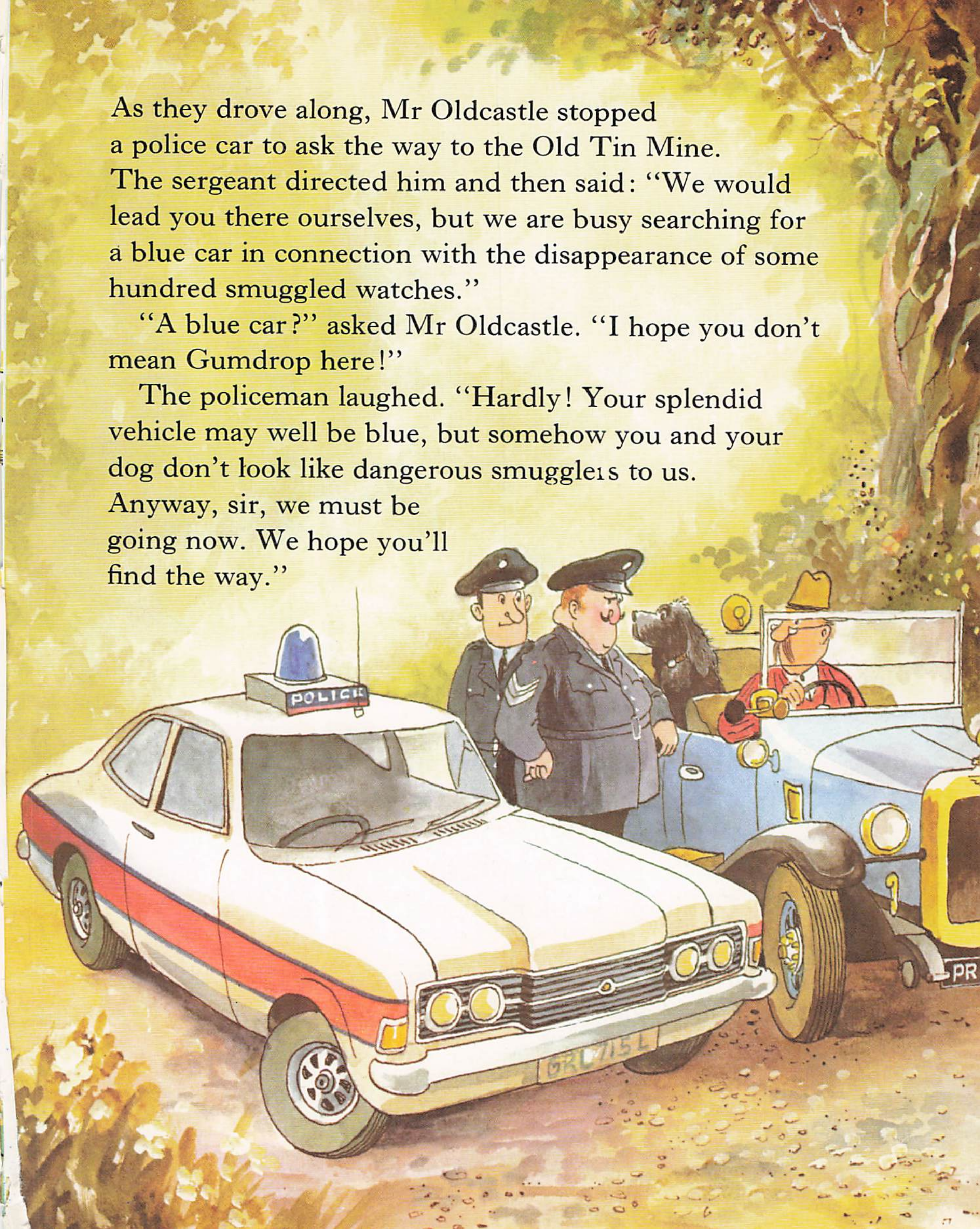
But the dog just stood there, wagging his tail. Mr Oldcastle was exasperated. "I suppose we'll have to find your home. As if you haven't caused me enough trouble already! You're a wretched, dim, stupid, horrible little quadruped!! You're a Horrible Horace!!!"

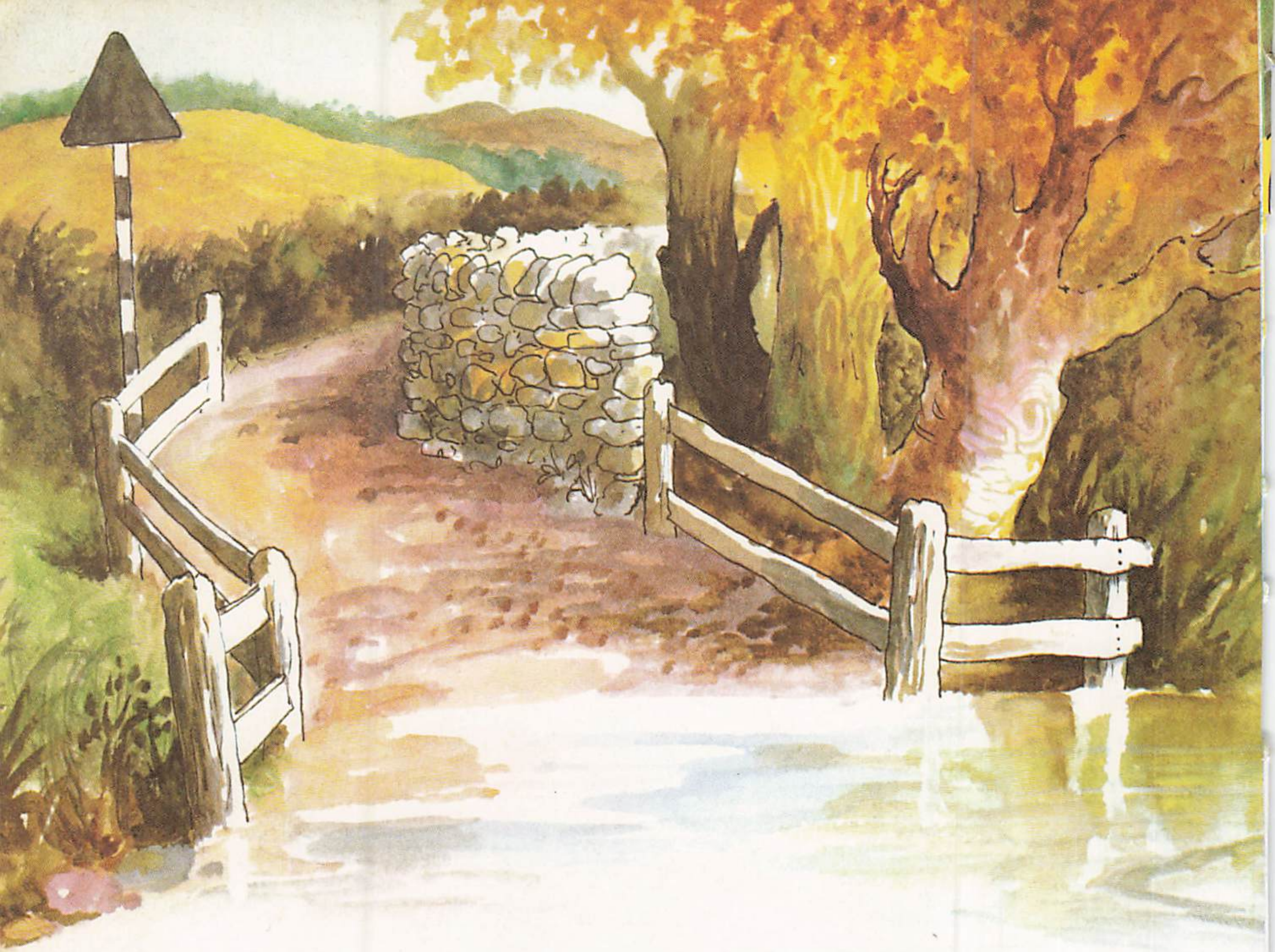
And Horace, as he now became, just settled down again and wagged his tail. Mr Oldcastle looked at the address on Horace's collar. It read: "The Old Tin Mine, Tresowas." He got into the car and they drove off.

As they drove along, Mr Oldcastle stopped a police car to ask the way to the Old Tin Mine. The sergeant directed him and then said: "We would lead you there ourselves, but we are busy searching for a blue car in connection with the disappearance of some hundred smuggled watches."

"A blue car?" asked Mr Oldcastle. "I hope you don't mean Gumdrop here!"

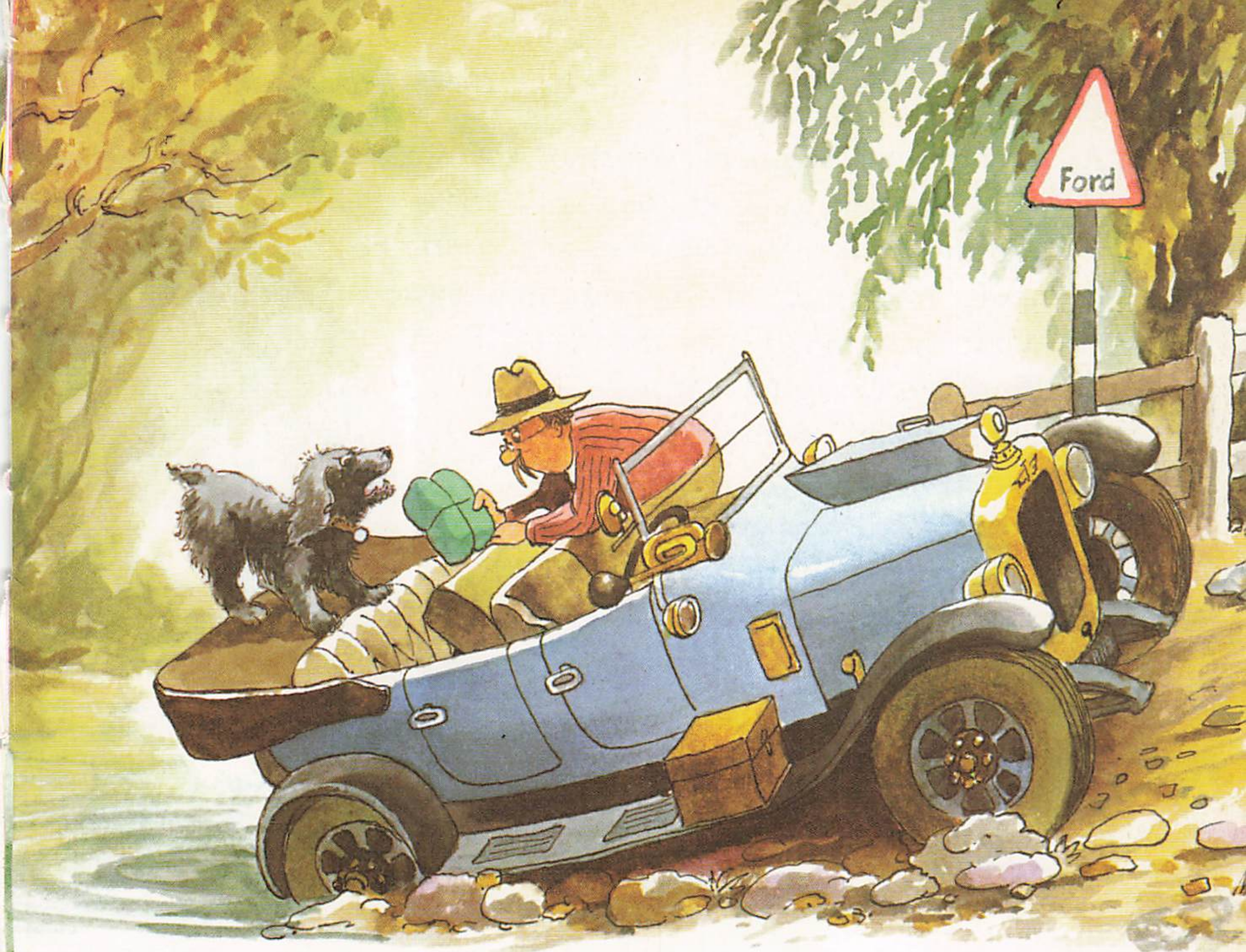
The policeman laughed. "Hardly! Your splendid vehicle may well be blue, but somehow you and your dog don't look like dangerous smugglers to us. Anyway, sir, we must be going now. We hope you'll find the way."





So Mr Oldcastle and Horace set out to search for the Old Tin Mine. The road led to a stream and they had to cross it by the ford. Unfortunately, the water splashed all over Gumdrop as they crossed over and the engine stopped. Gumdrop wouldn't start again because his plugs were wet.

"Luckily, I have a spare set under the back seat," said Mr Oldcastle as he lifted the seat to get the plugs. But there, under the seat, he was astonished to find a strange parcel. He pulled it out, and Horace barked at it.



Mr Oldcastle was even more astonished when he opened it, for inside the parcel was a great shining heap of valuable watches – quite a hundred or more!

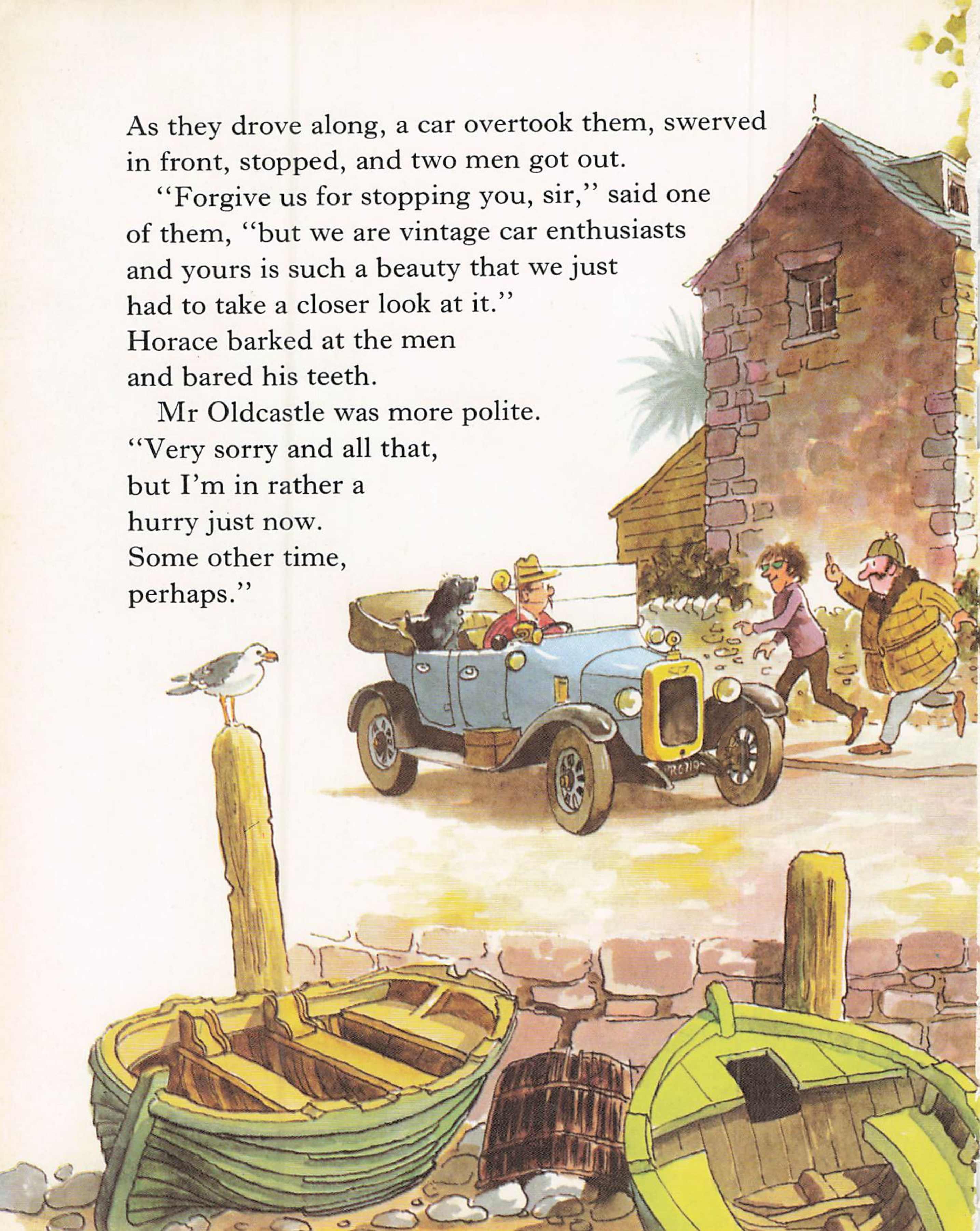
"The smuggled watches!" cried Mr Oldcastle. "How on earth did they get here?" It was no good asking Horace. He just barked at the parcel even more. "We must get these to the police promptly!" Mr Oldcastle said.

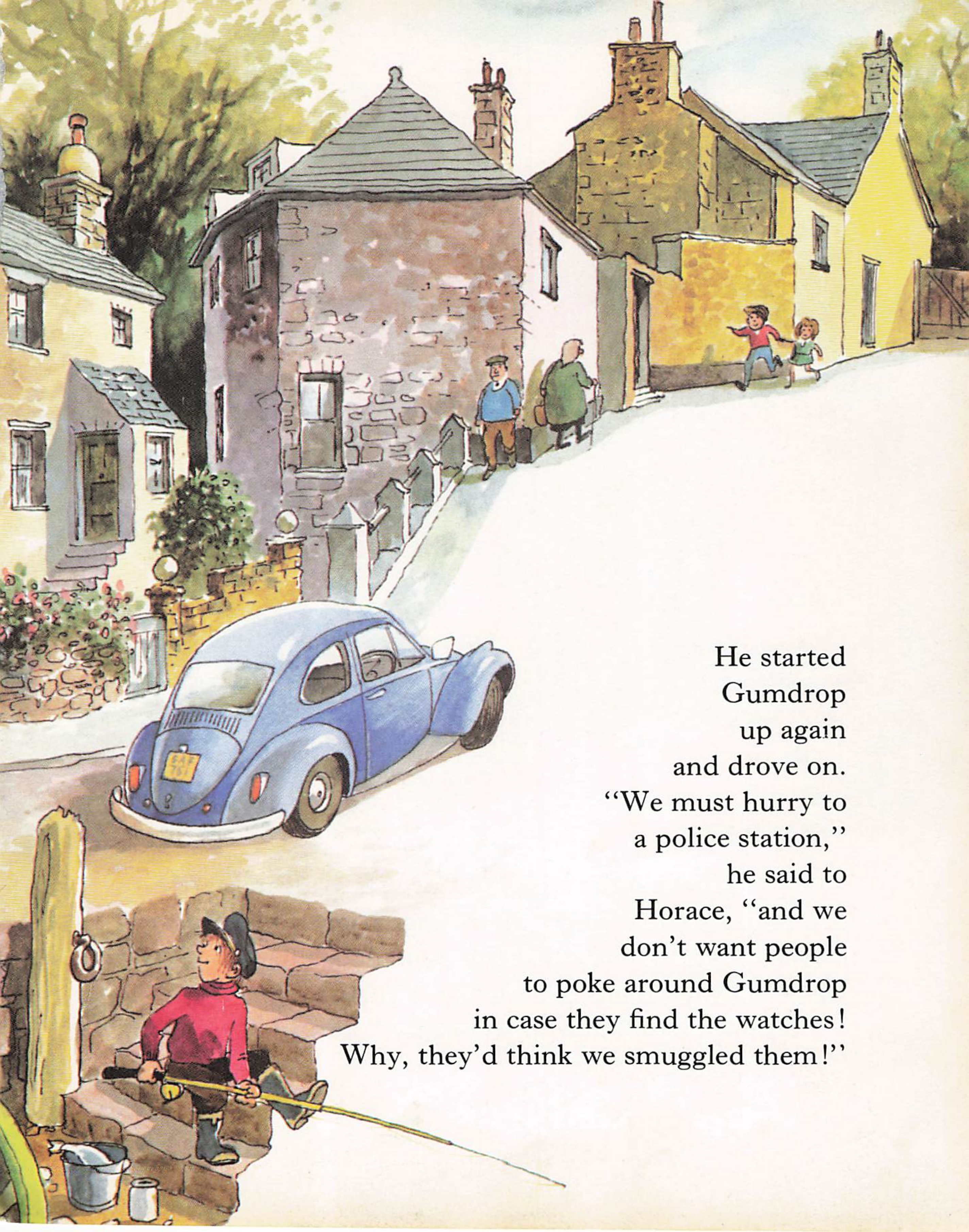
He put them back under the seat, changed Gumdrop's plugs quickly, started the engine again and drove off.

As they drove along, a car overtook them, swerved in front, stopped, and two men got out.

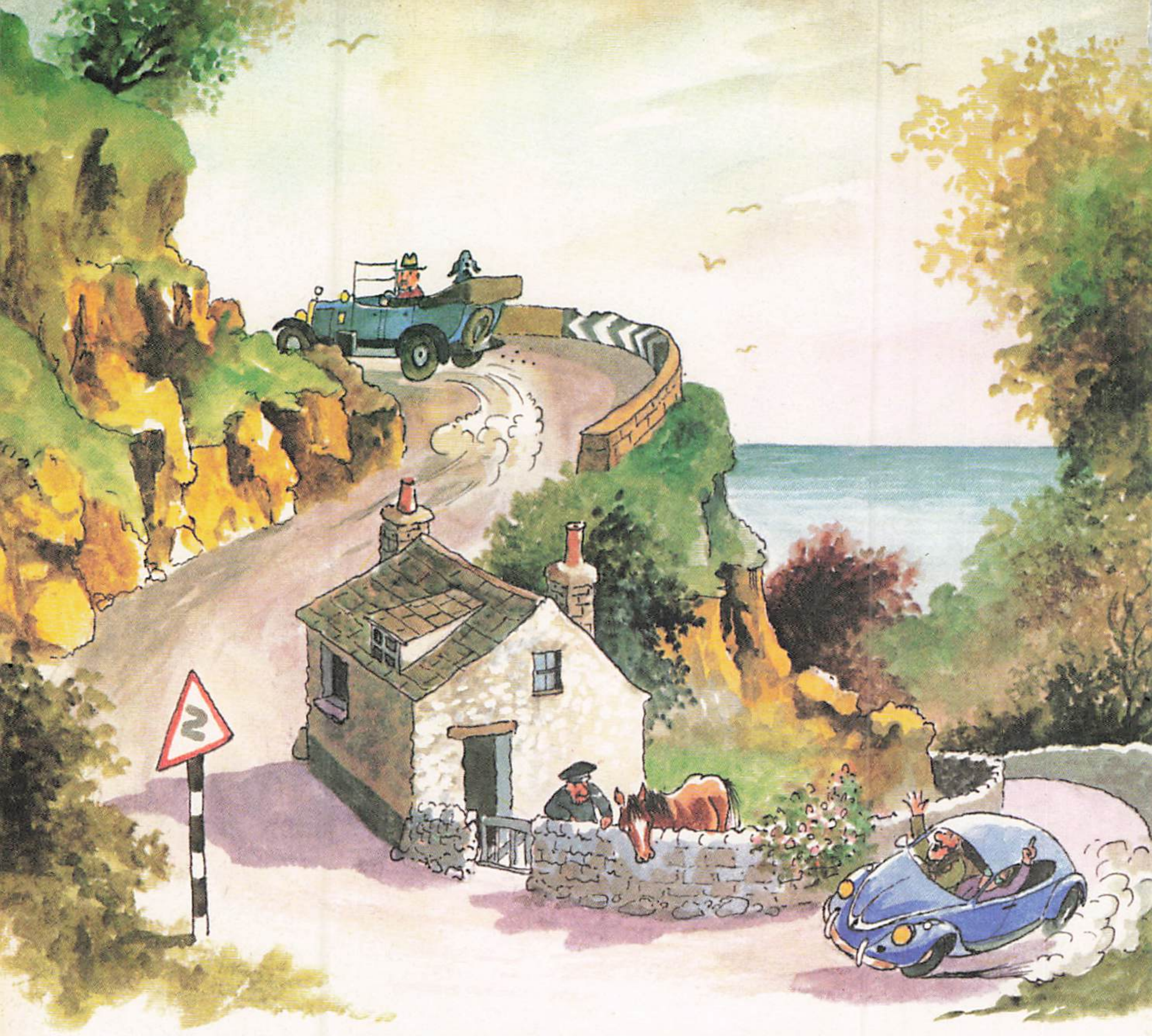
"Forgive us for stopping you, sir," said one of them, "but we are vintage car enthusiasts and yours is such a beauty that we just had to take a closer look at it."
Horace barked at the men
and bared his teeth.

Mr Oldcastle was more polite.
"Very sorry and all that,
but I'm in rather a
hurry just now.
Some other time,
perhaps."





He started Gumdrop up again and drove on. "We must hurry to a police station," he said to Horace, "and we don't want people to poke around Gumdrop in case they find the watches! Why, they'd think we smuggled them!"



They raced along the winding Cornish roads in search of a police station. Suddenly Horace began to bark again, and Mr Oldcastle saw that those indefatigable enthusiasts were following them and waving at them to stop.

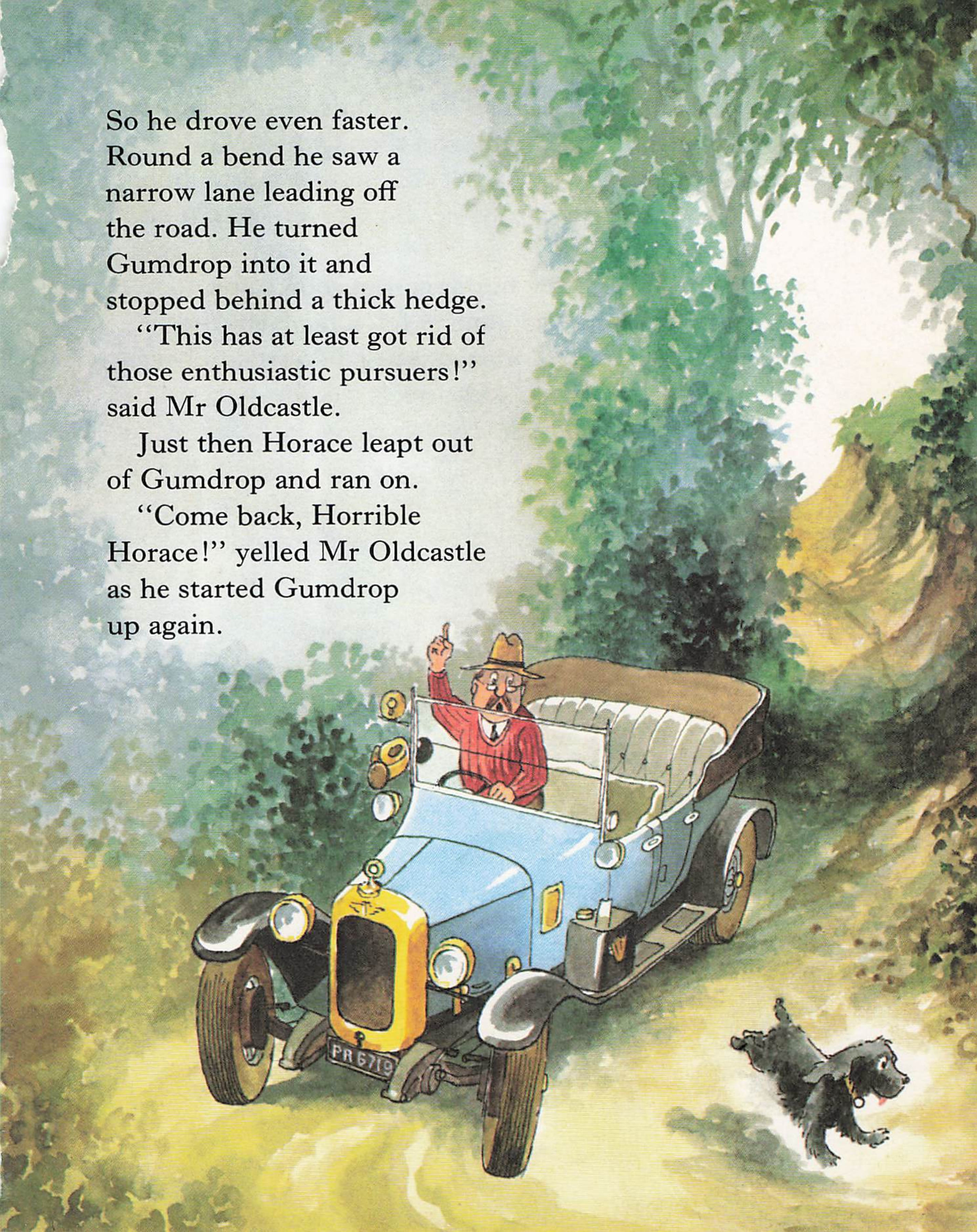
"I know that Gumdrop's a beauty," he said in exasperation, "but this is ridiculous!"

So he drove even faster. Round a bend he saw a narrow lane leading off the road. He turned Gumdrop into it and stopped behind a thick hedge.

"This has at least got rid of those enthusiastic pursuers!" said Mr Oldcastle.

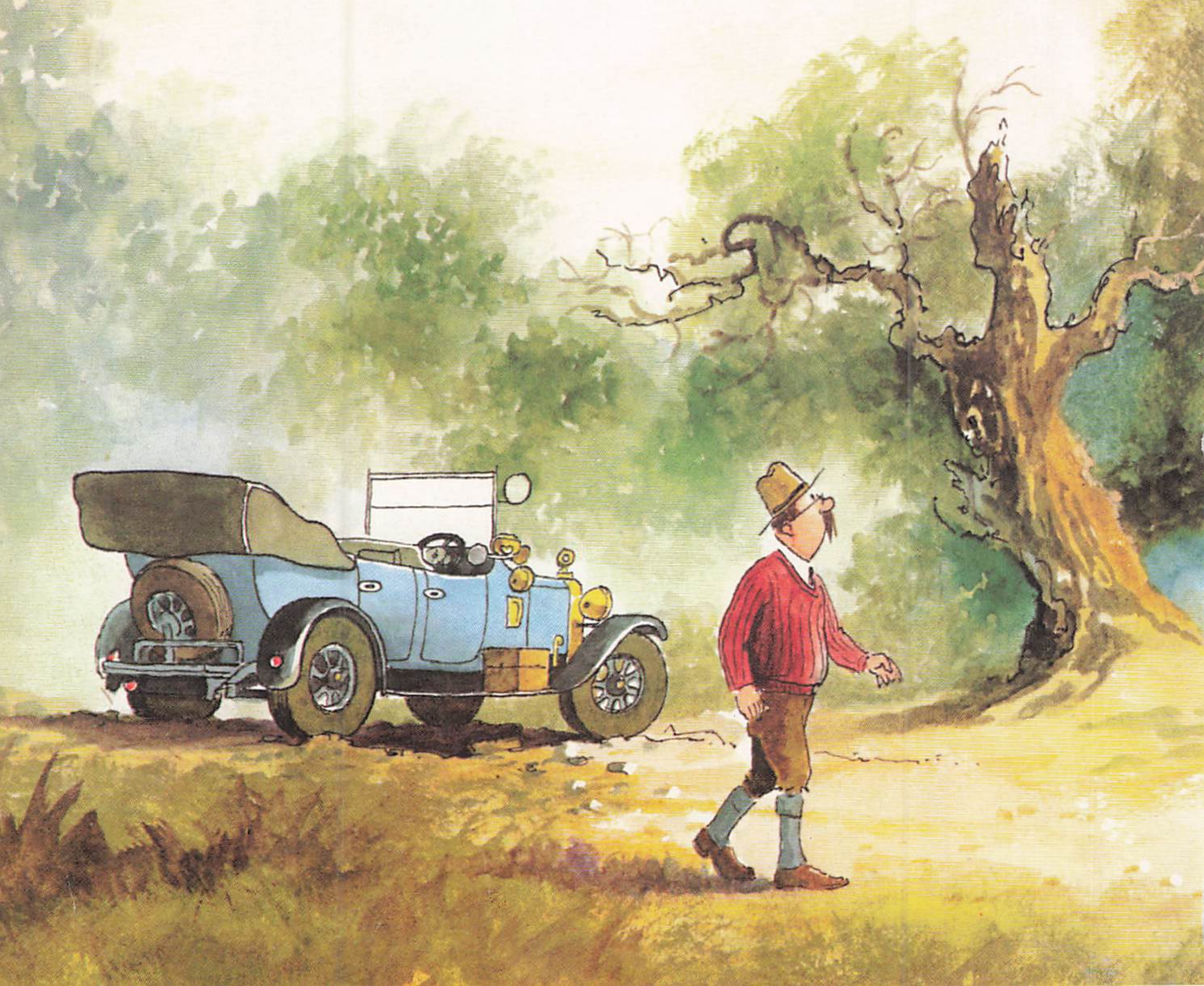
Just then Horace leapt out of Gumdrop and ran on.

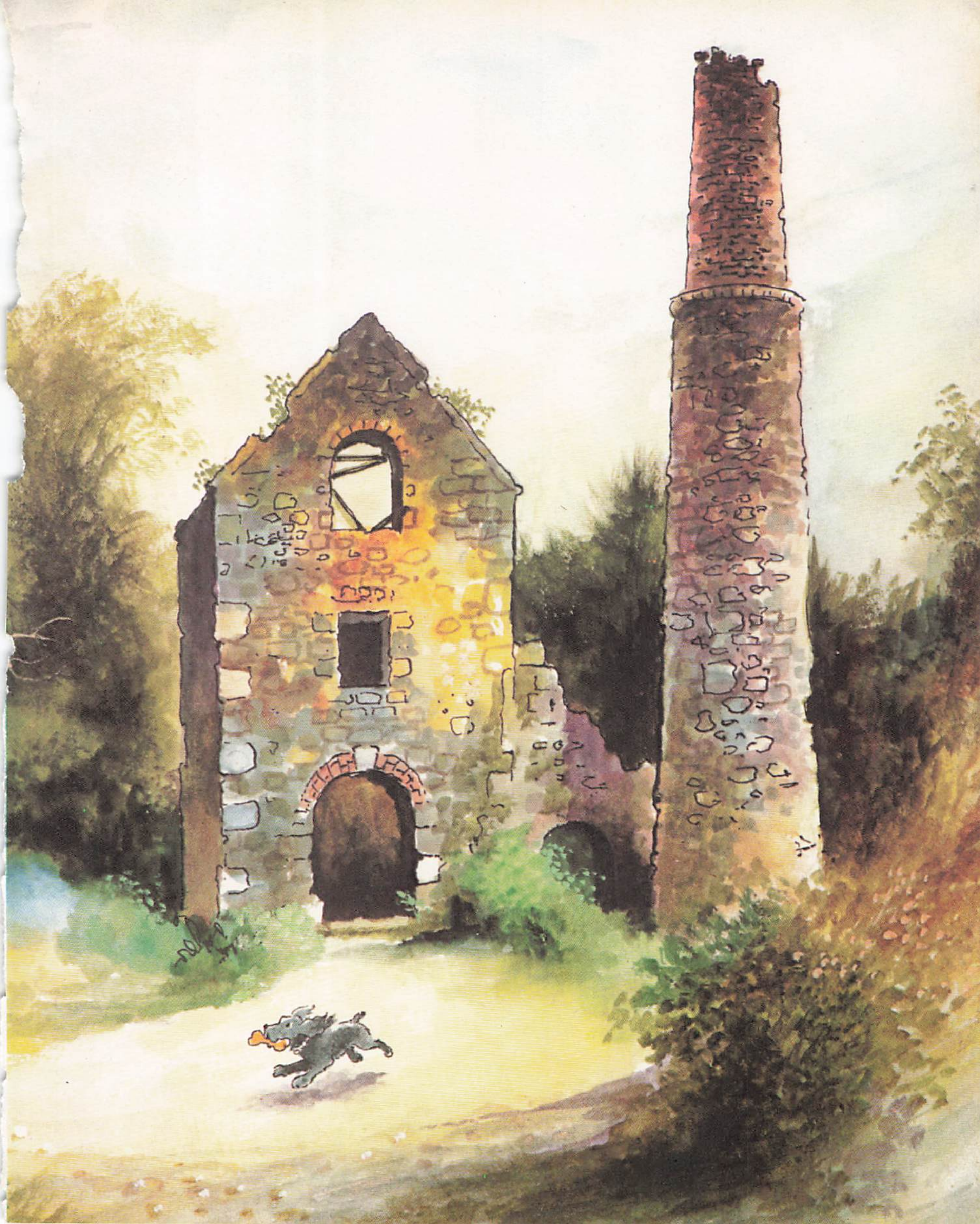
"Come back, Horrible Horace!" yelled Mr Oldcastle as he started Gumdrop up again.

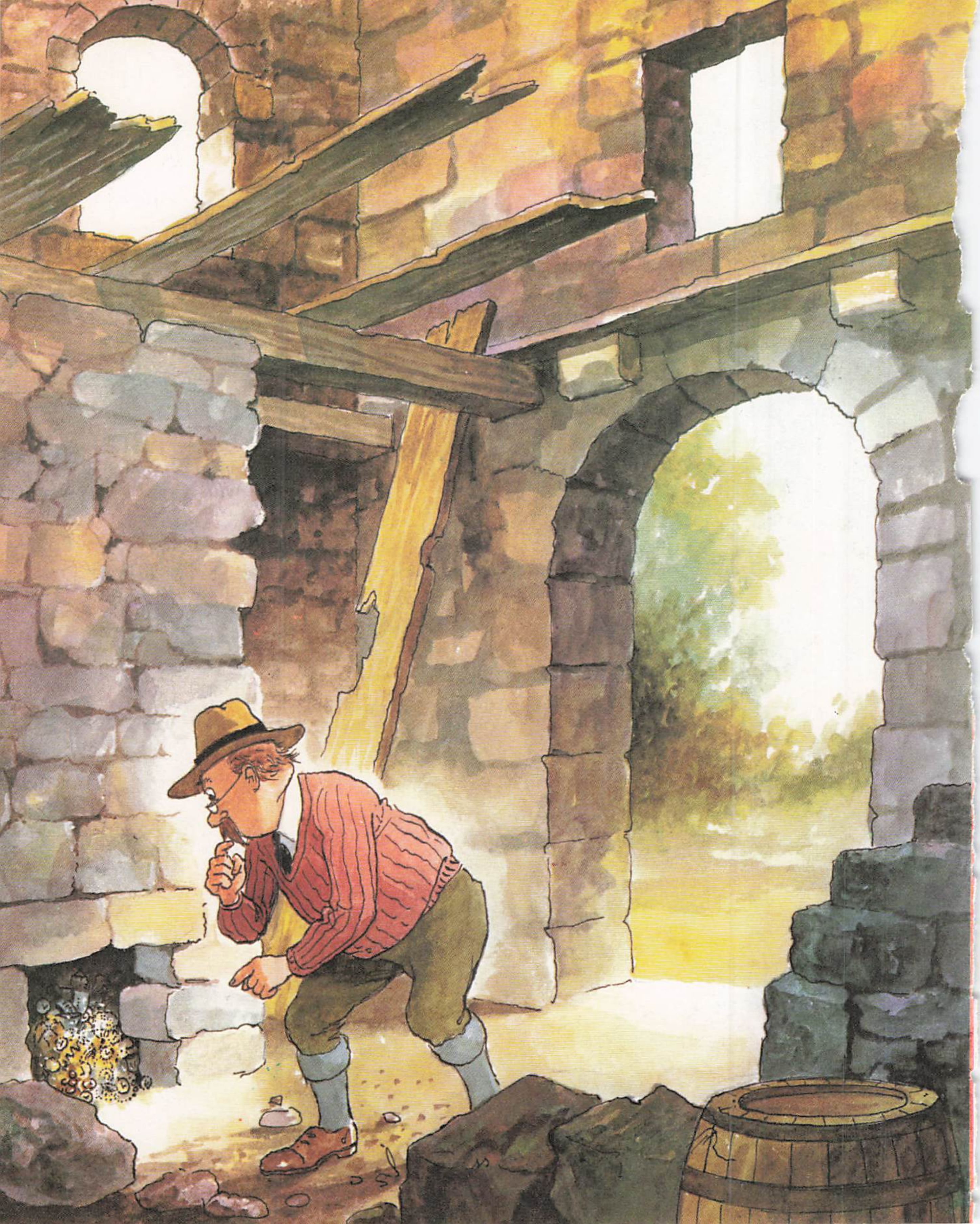


Horace raced along the lane, with Gumdrop after him. The dog took another turning and there, when Mr Oldcastle followed, he saw a tall chimney by a crumbling engine-house: the Old Tin Mine! So Horace had found the way home himself!

Horace dashed into the building, but soon came running out again: he had gone to fetch his favourite bone. He jumped into Gumdrop, settled down and began to chew it with the utmost pleasure.





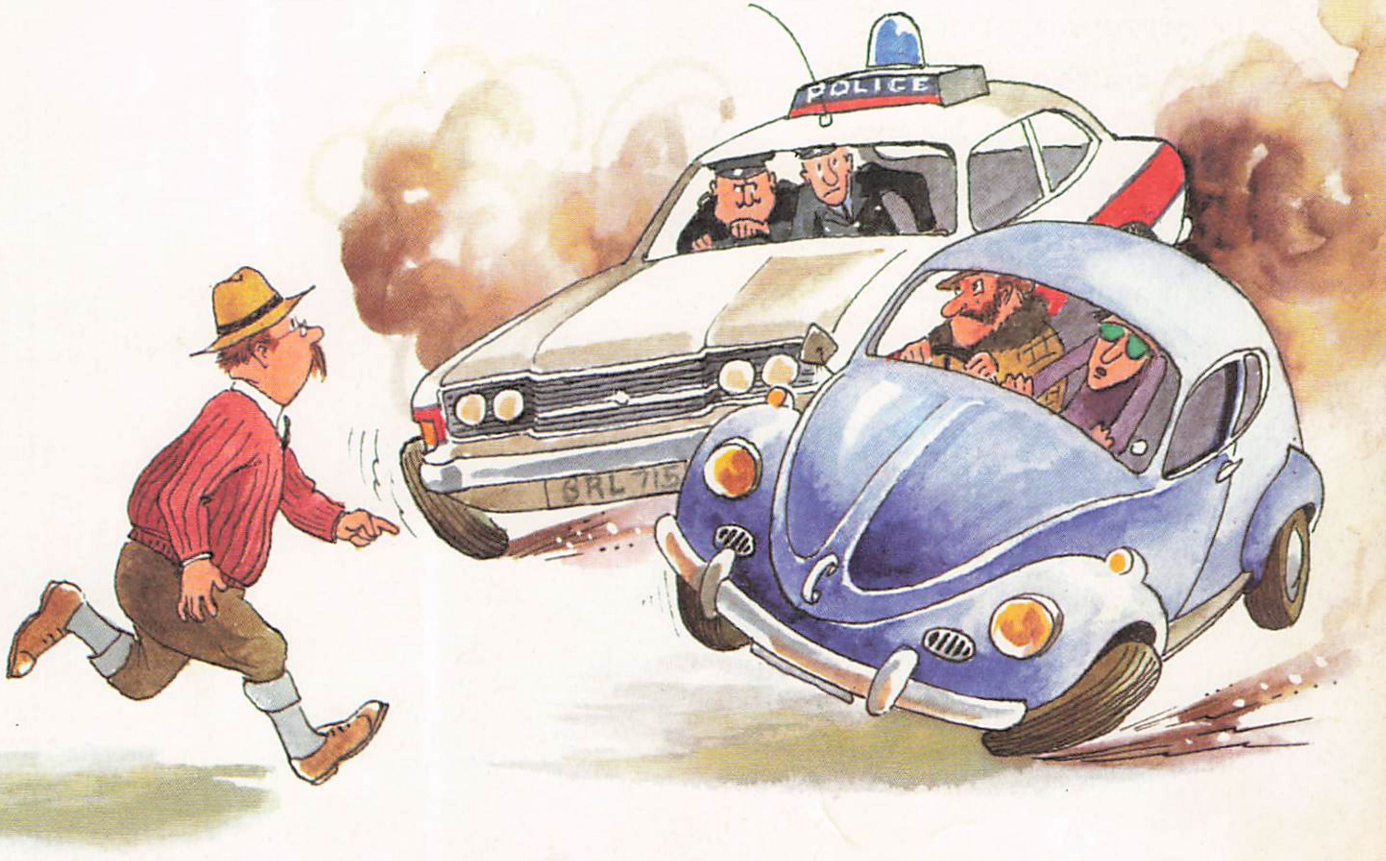


Mr Oldcastle went into the building himself to search for the owner. But it was empty. A strange place for anybody to live in, thought Mr Oldcastle as he stumbled over a boulder.

He must have moved it, for behind it he saw a large hole and inside the hole was a glittering heap. There were watches, and jewels, and silver and gold.

"The smugglers' den!" cried Mr Oldcastle in amazement. "I shall certainly have news for the police!" And he ran out to get into Gumdrop.

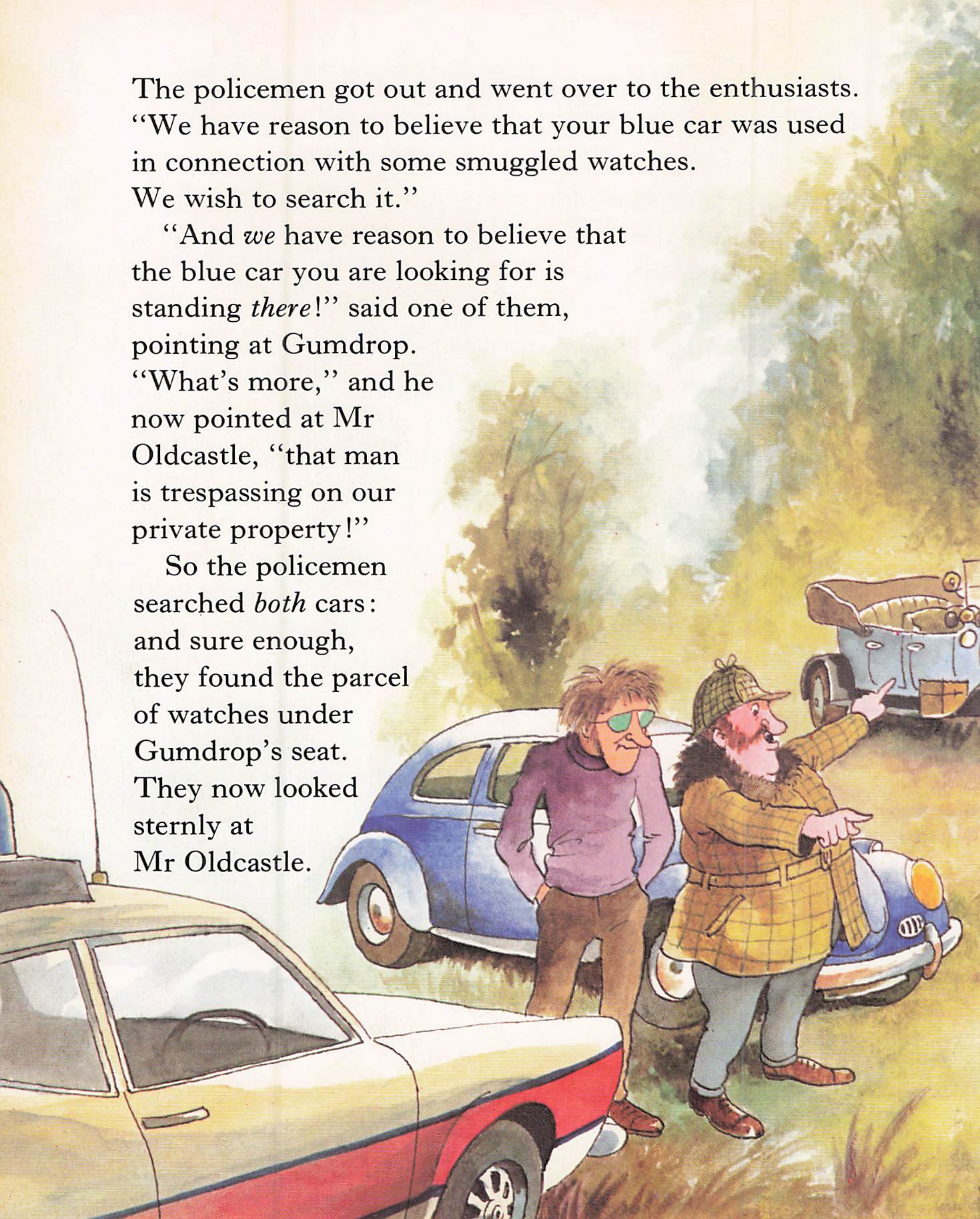
Just then, in a cloud of dust, two cars skidded to a halt in front of him: the blue car with the vintage car enthusiasts, and the white car with the policemen!



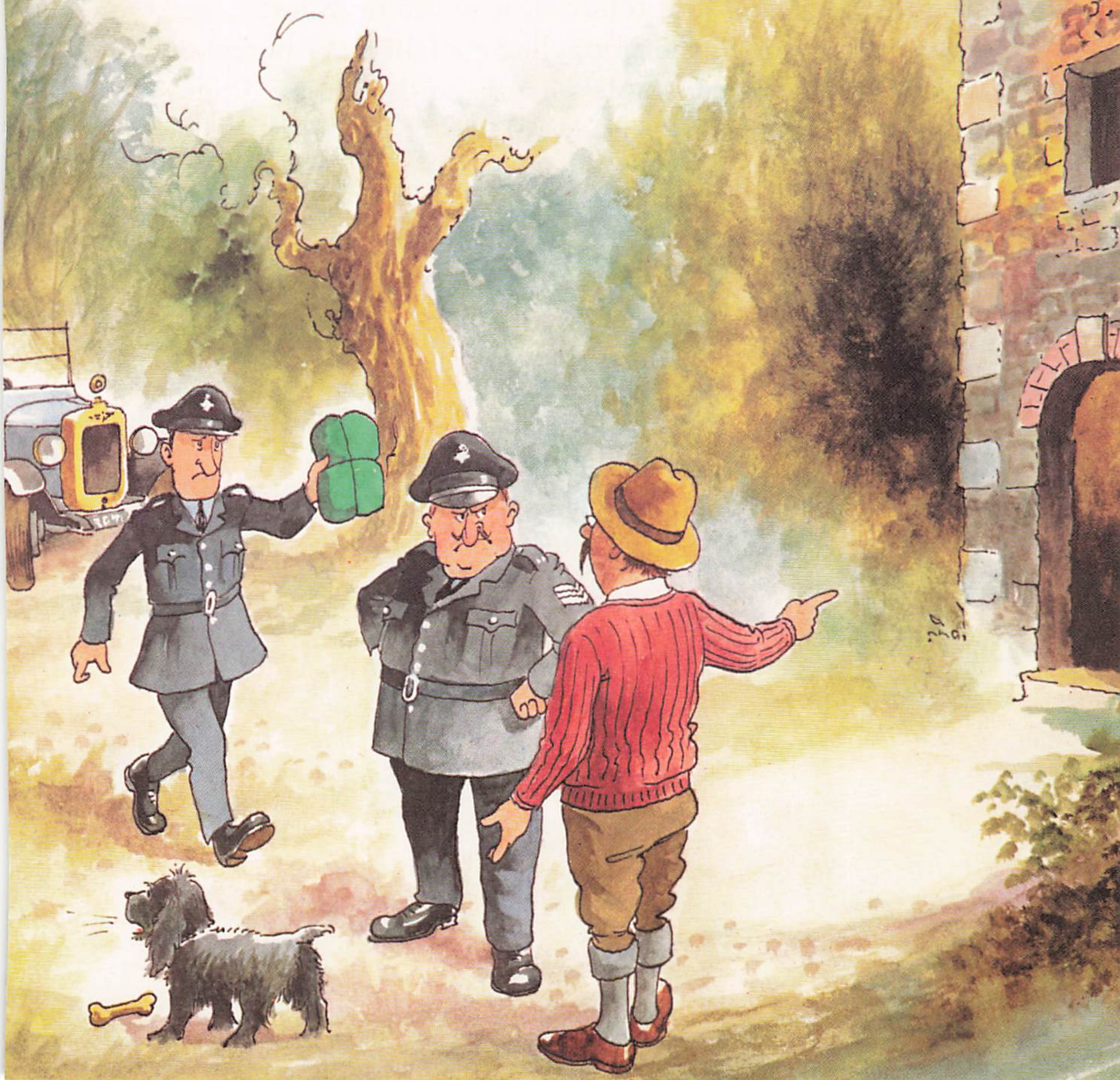
The policemen got out and went over to the enthusiasts. “We have reason to believe that your blue car was used in connection with some smuggled watches. We wish to search it.”

“And *we* have reason to believe that the blue car you are looking for is standing *there*!” said one of them, pointing at Gumdrop. “What's more,” and he now pointed at Mr Oldcastle, “that man is trespassing on our private property!”

So the policemen searched *both* cars: and sure enough, they found the parcel of watches under Gumdrop's seat. They now looked sternly at Mr Oldcastle.

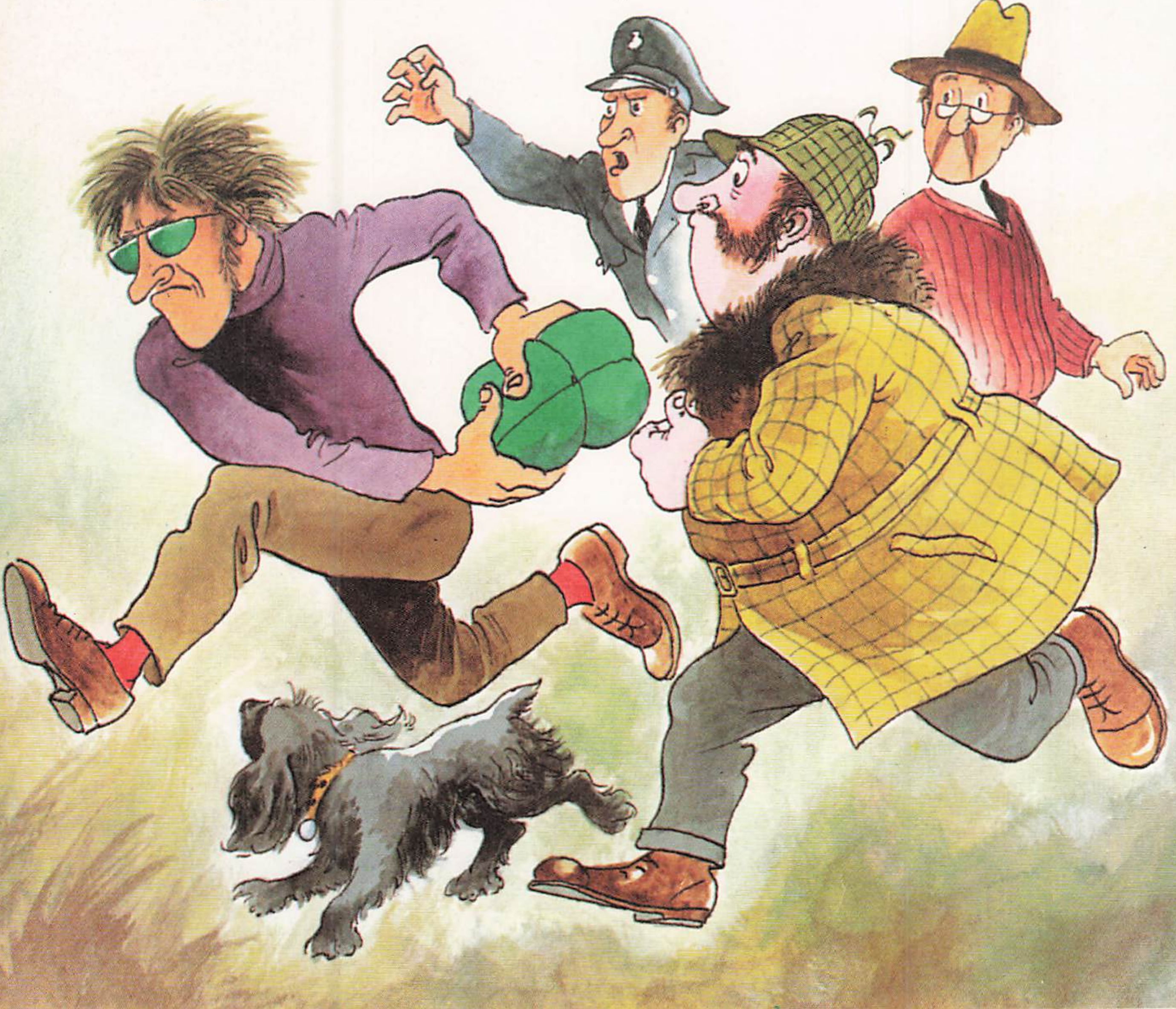


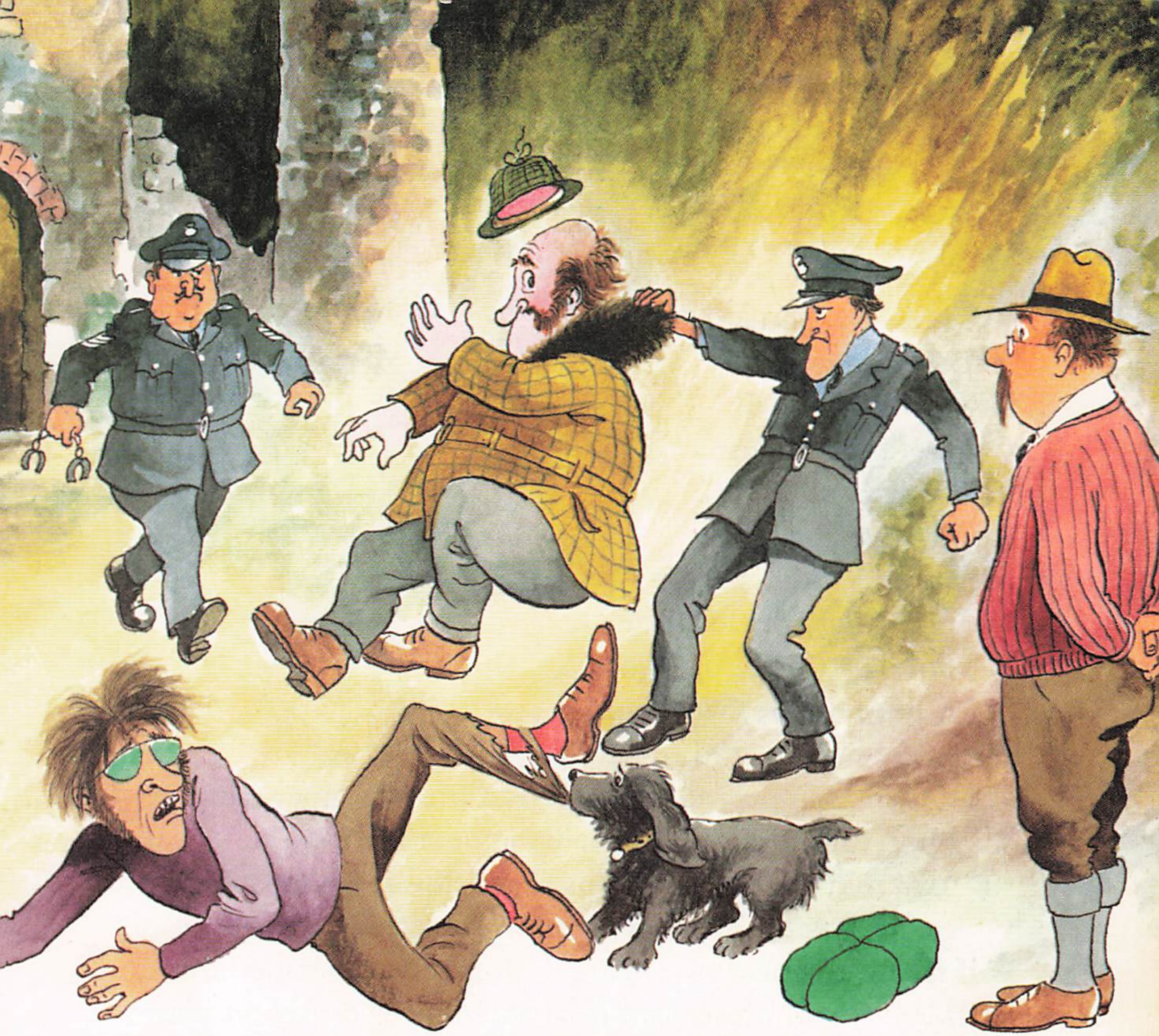
"Before you arrest me," he said calmly, "please have the goodness to look into this tin mine which, I gather, is the home of these gentlemen here." Mr Oldcastle's request was so polite that the sergeant turned and marched into the tin mine.



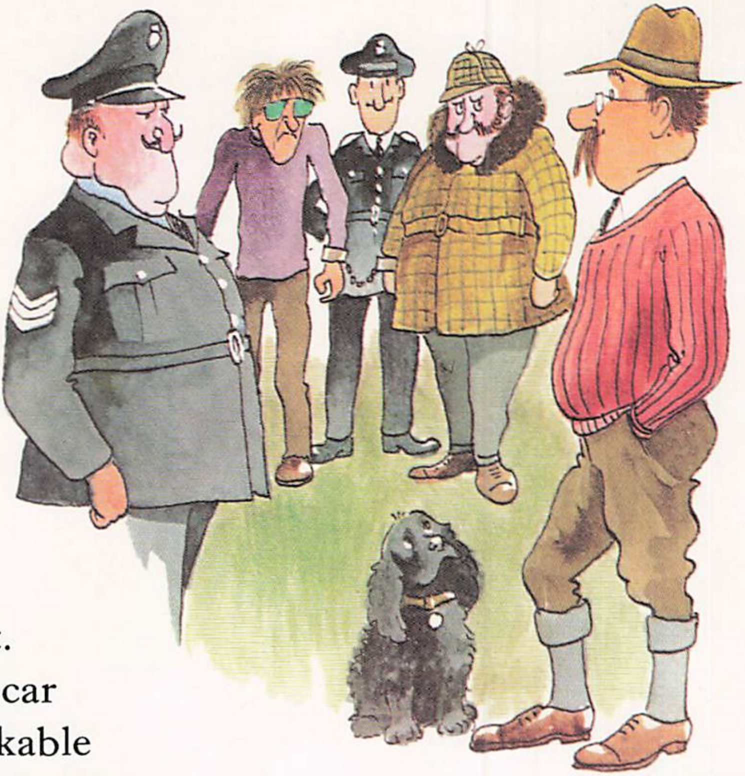
Mr Oldcastle saw it all now. These vintage car enthusiasts were nothing but a pair of smugglers! They must have panicked and hidden their watches in Gumdrop at the quayside and then tried to get them back later. That would be why they chased Gumdrop. But the policemen must have seen their blue car and followed it to the tin mine.

Just then, one of the smugglers snatched the parcel of watches from the constable's hands, and with the other smuggler he started to run away!





Horace leapt at one smuggler and pulled him down by the trouserleg, and the constable jumped on the other and held him by the collar. The sergeant had meanwhile found the treasure in the mine. He came out, saw the struggle, realized the truth in a flash, and seized the smugglers and arrested them.

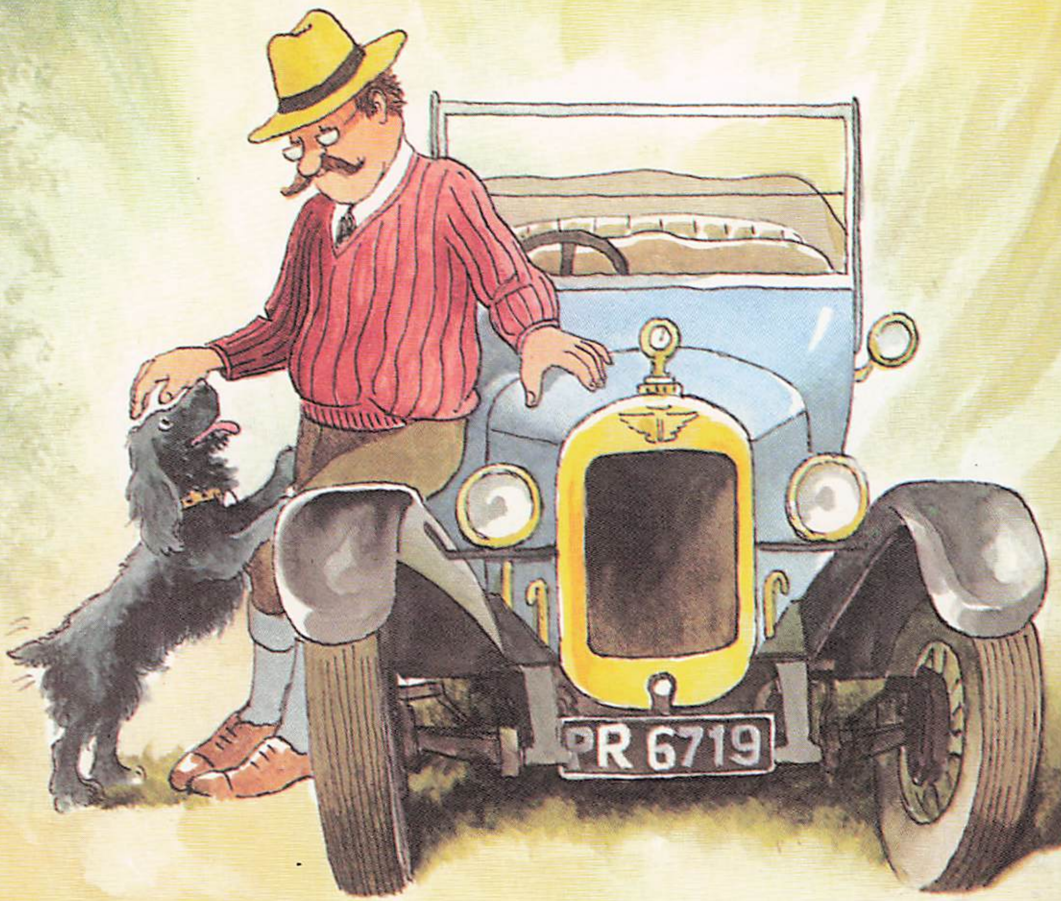


"We owe you our sincere apologies, sir," he said to Mr Oldcastle, "and also our congratulations for discovering the smugglers' hideout. Without that splendid car of yours, or this remarkable black hound here, we would never have recovered the goods."

Horace, it appeared, belonged to the smugglers, but they had turned him out cruelly some time before.

"You may as well keep this dog," the sergeant told Mr Oldcastle. "After all, they won't need a dog where *they* will spend the next few years." Horace was beside himself with joy. "And please call in at the police station on your way, sir," he added, "to collect the large reward that has been offered for the recovery of the treasure."

Mr Oldcastle thanked the sergeant and turned to go, well satisfied with the day's work. He patted Gumdrop, his old and trusty friend. And he patted Horace, a new friend to them both.



Gumdrop finds a Friend
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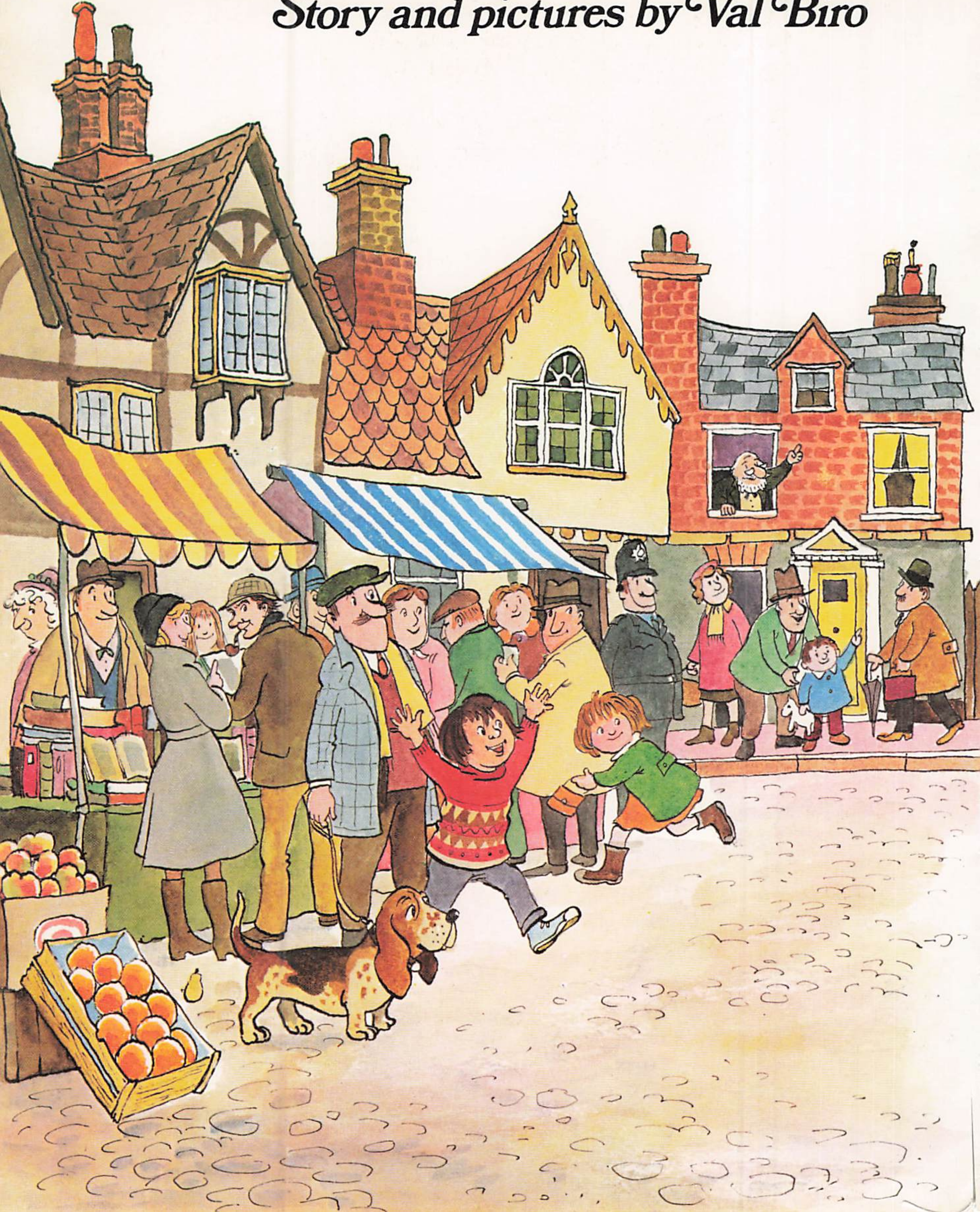
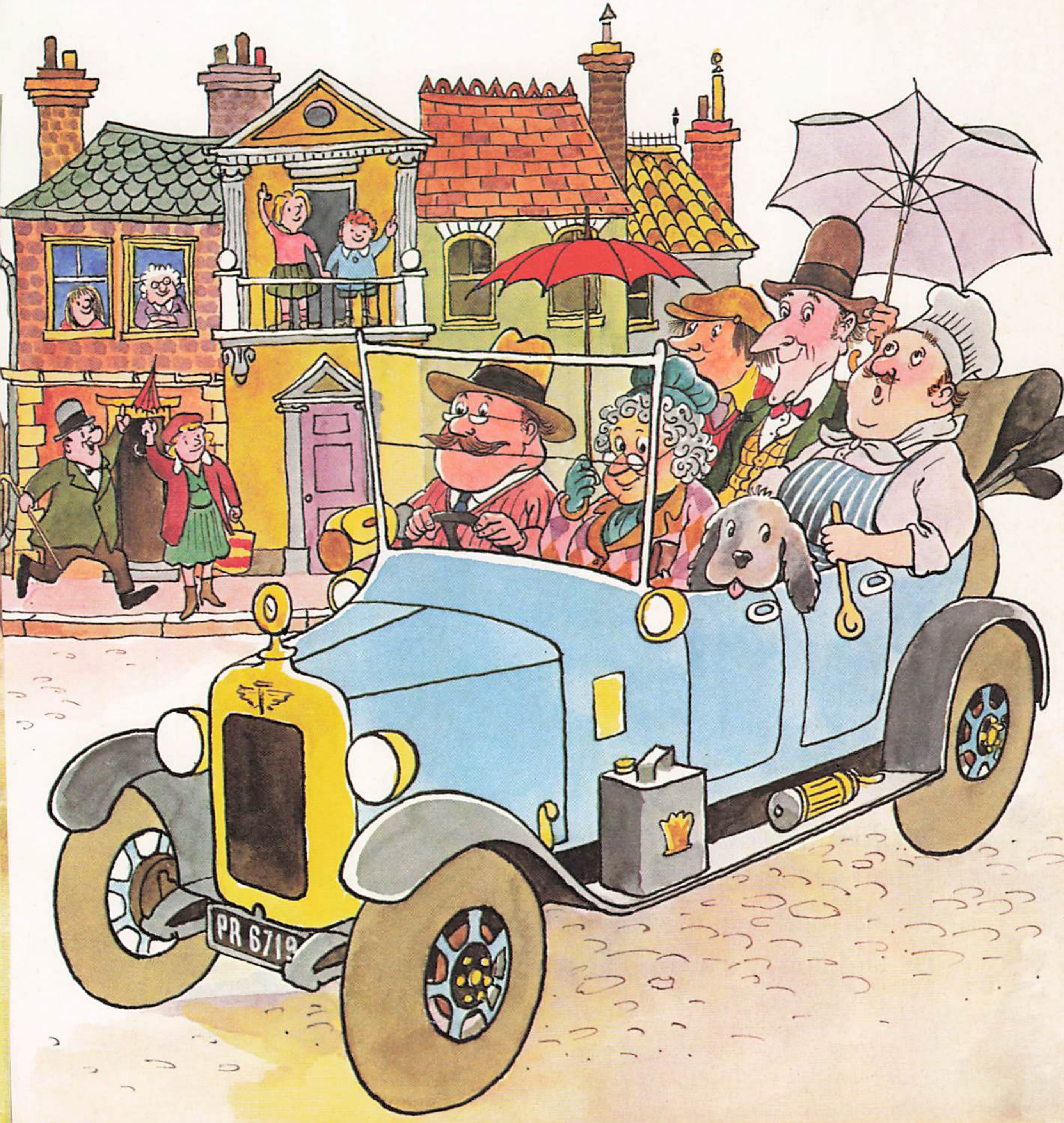
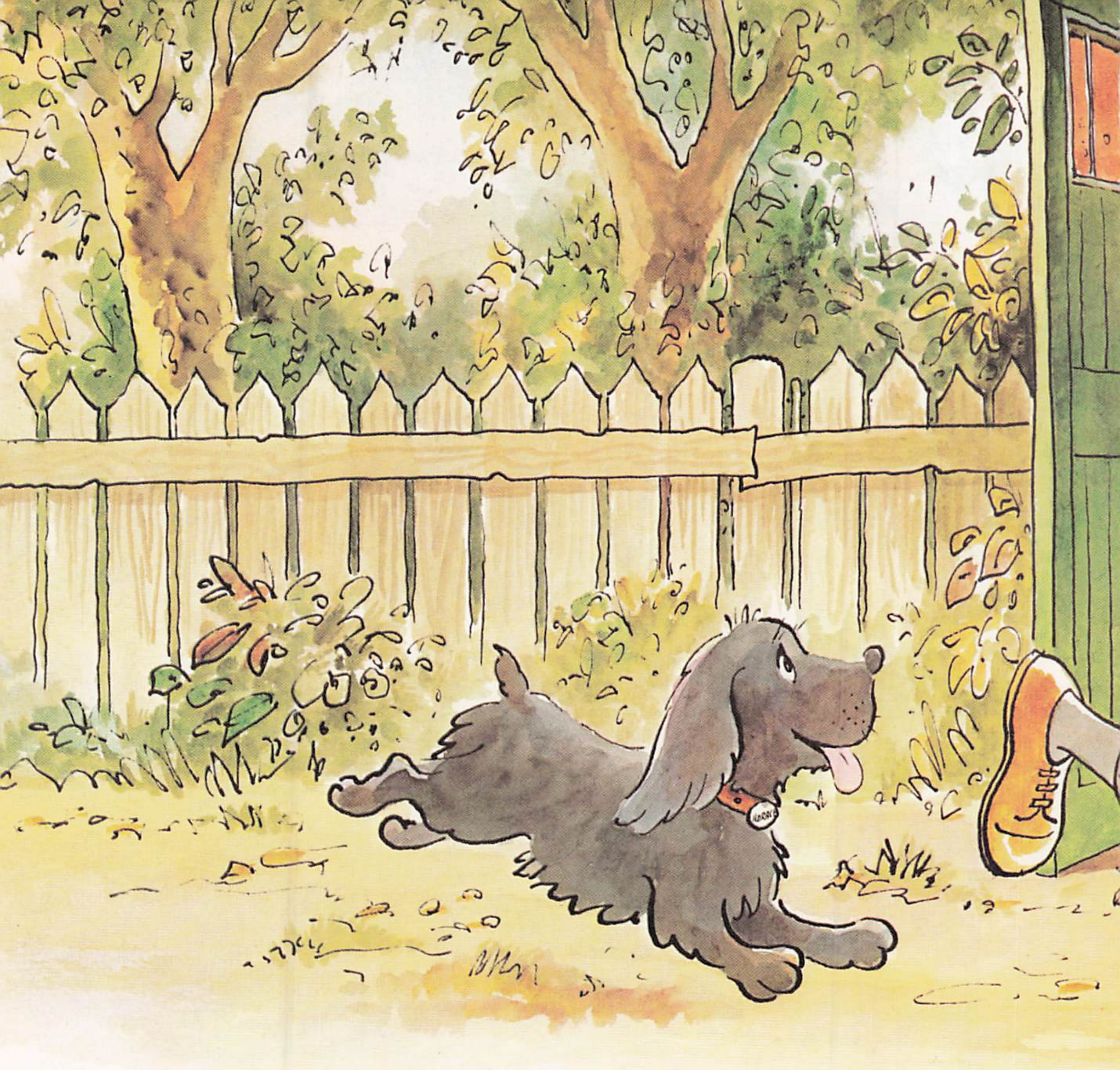
Story and pictures by Val Biro

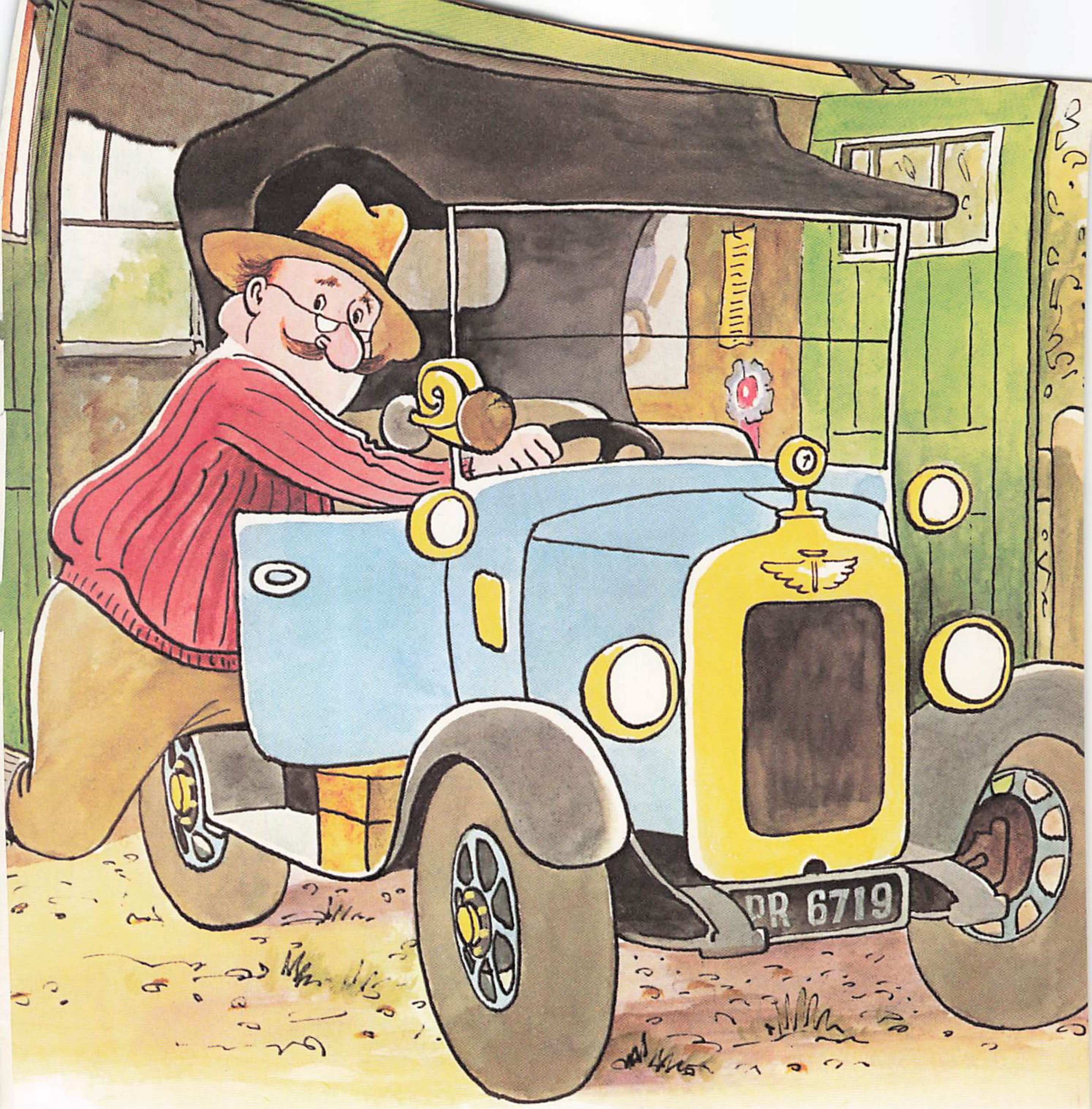


GUMDROP
HAS A BIRTHDAY

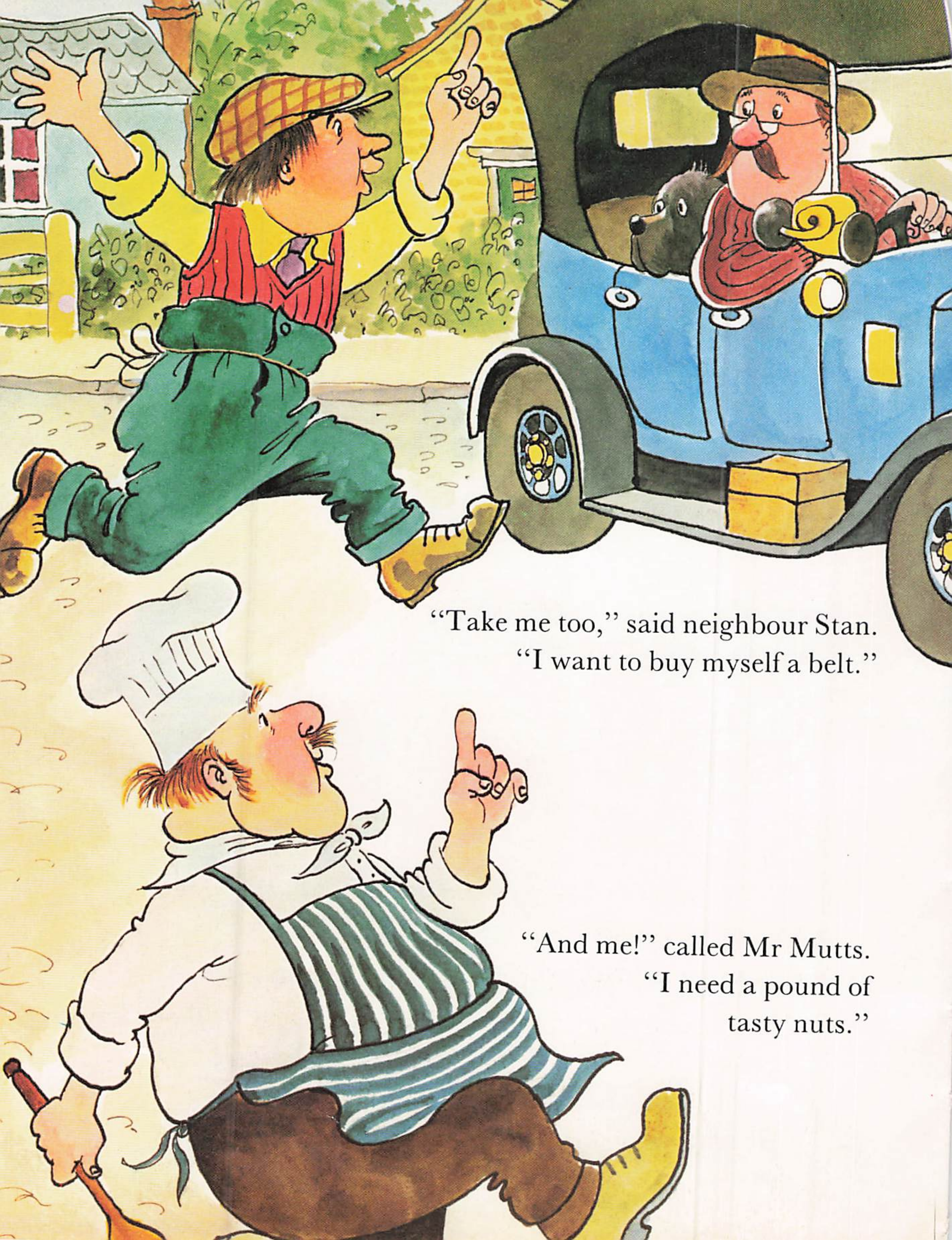




Mr Josiah Oldcastle had an old car with a shiny horn.
It had a black hood and it was called Gumdrop.
He also had a young dog with a wet nose.
He had floppy ears and he was called Horace.
Mr Oldcastle loved them both.

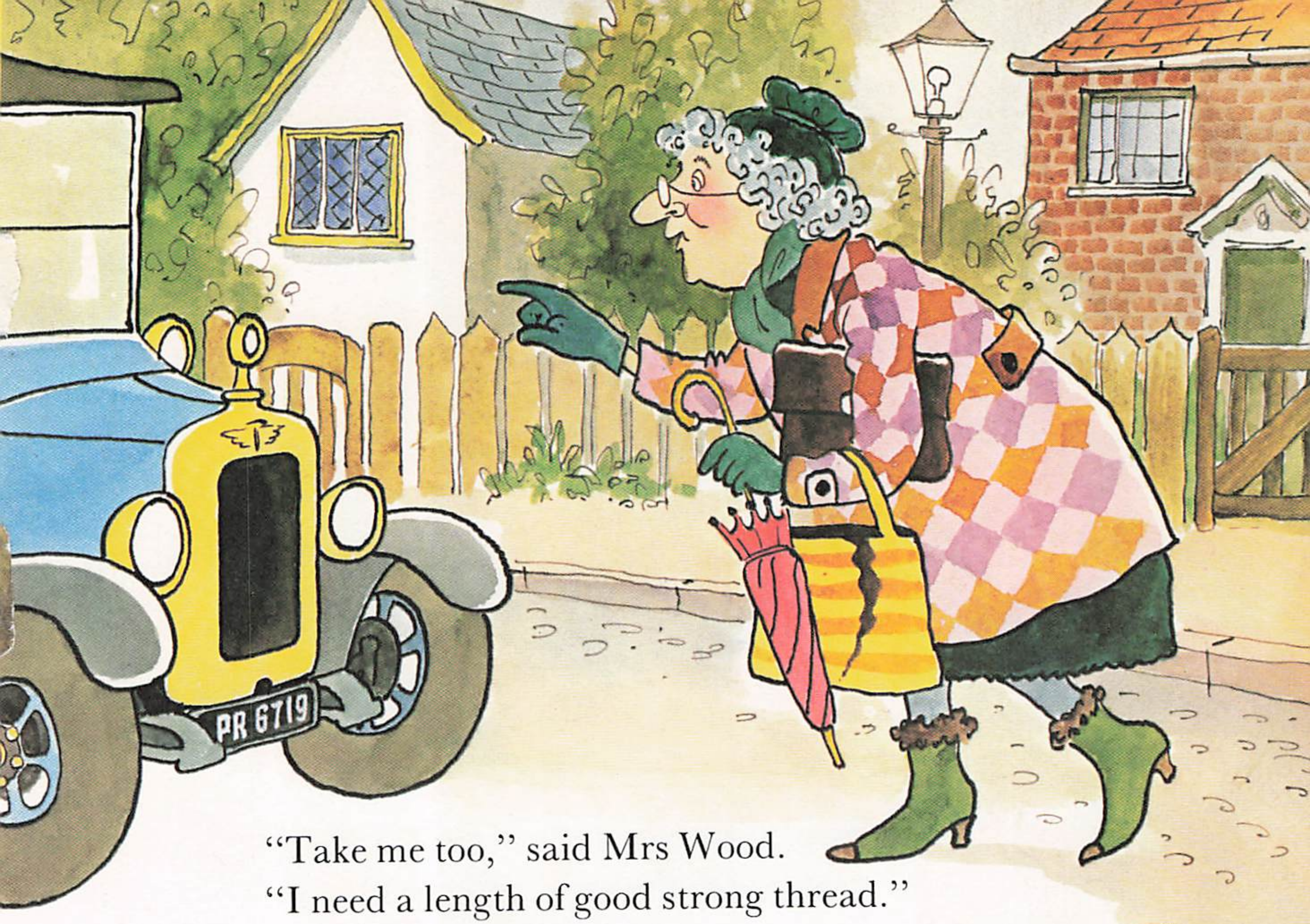


One day Mr Oldcastle hopped into Gumdrop.
"It's his birthday tomorrow," he said, "and we'll buy him a cake."
Horace barked and hopped in too.
He liked cakes.

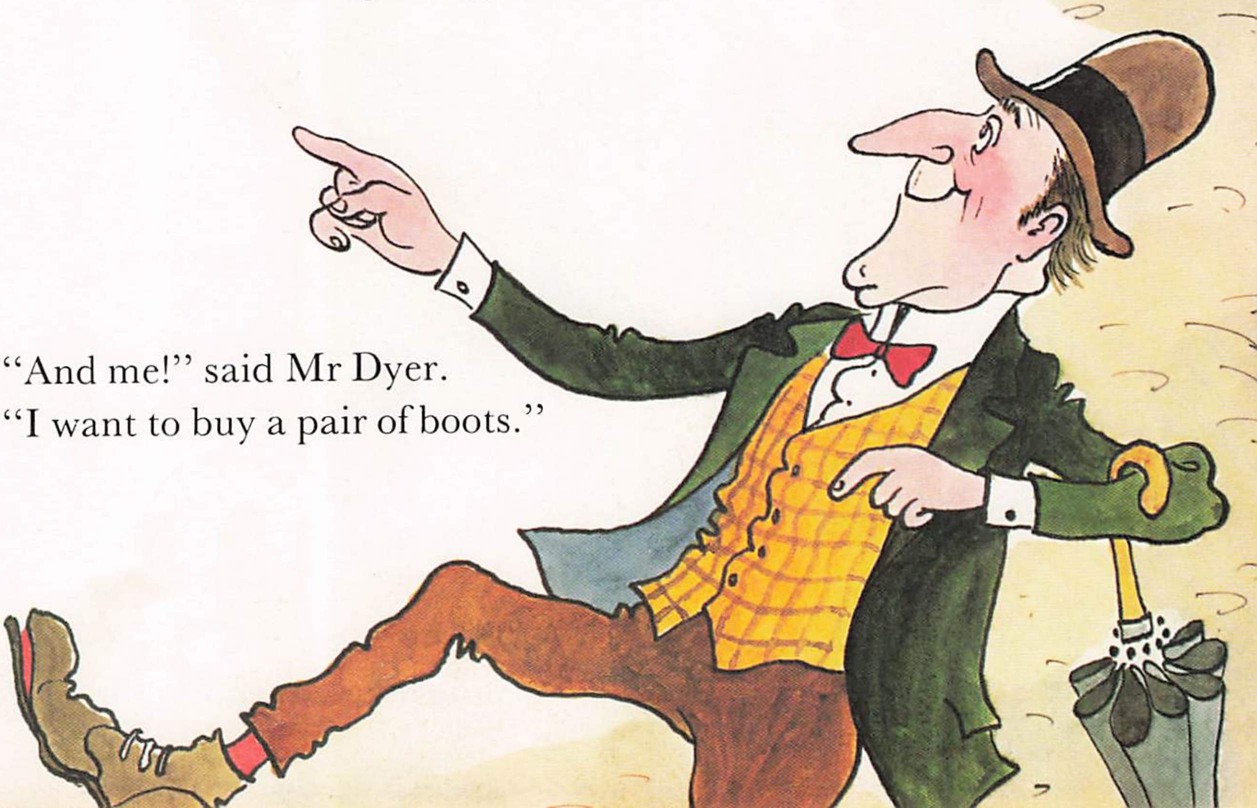


"Take me too," said neighbour Stan.
"I want to buy myself a belt."

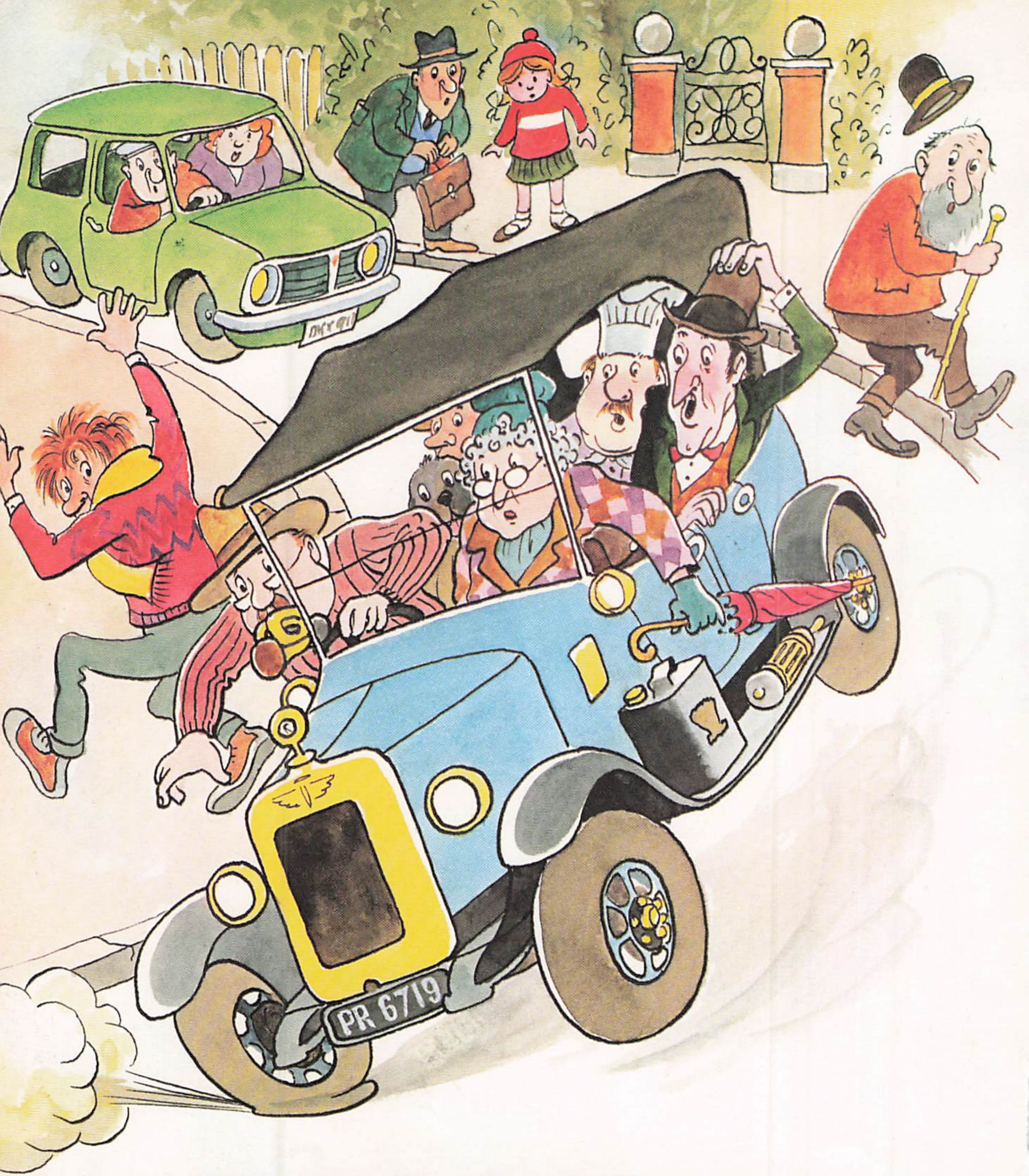
"And me!" called Mr Mutts.
"I need a pound of
tasty nuts."



"Take me too," said Mrs Wood.
"I need a length of good strong thread."

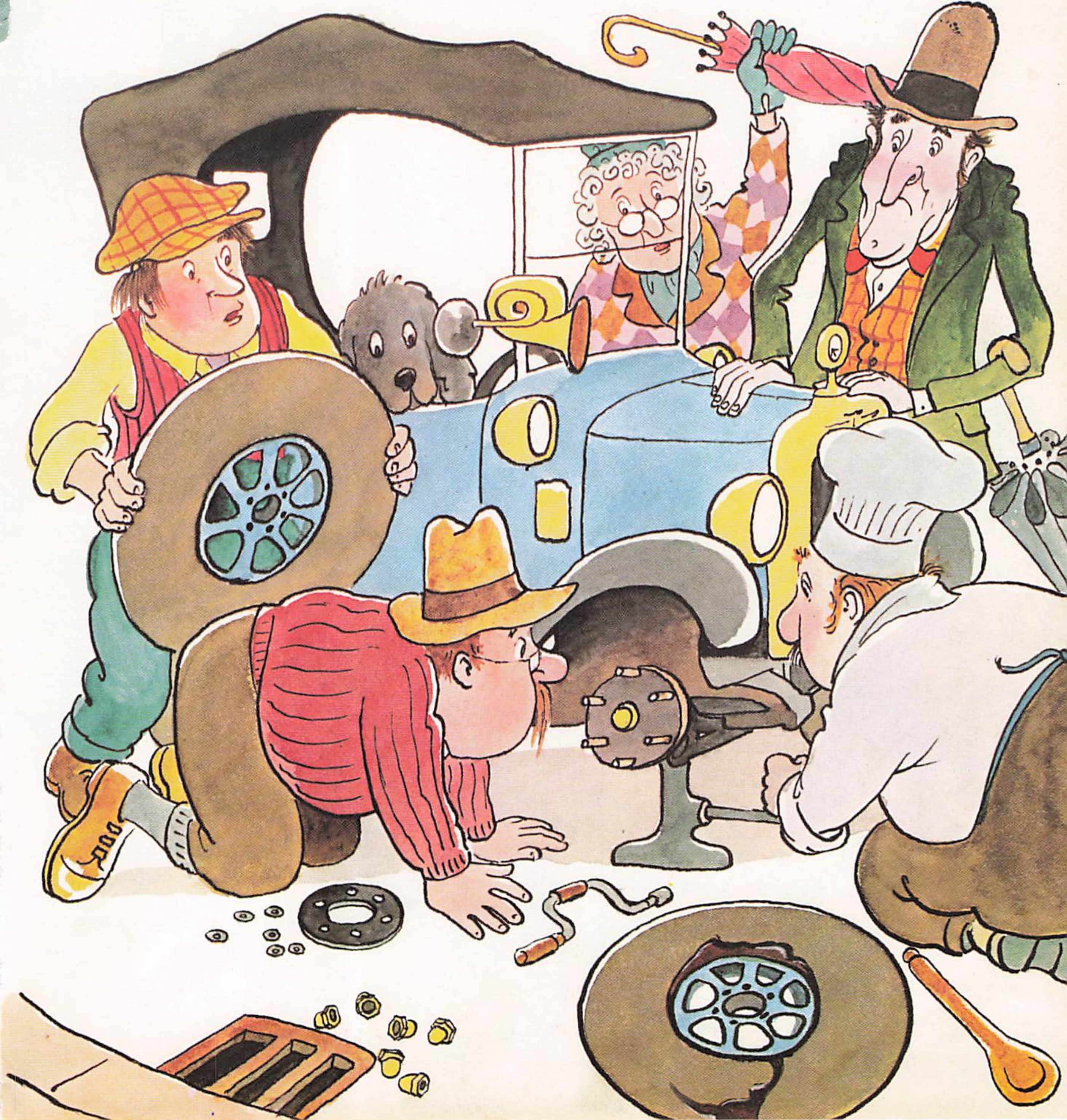


"And me!" said Mr Dyer.
"I want to buy a pair of boots."

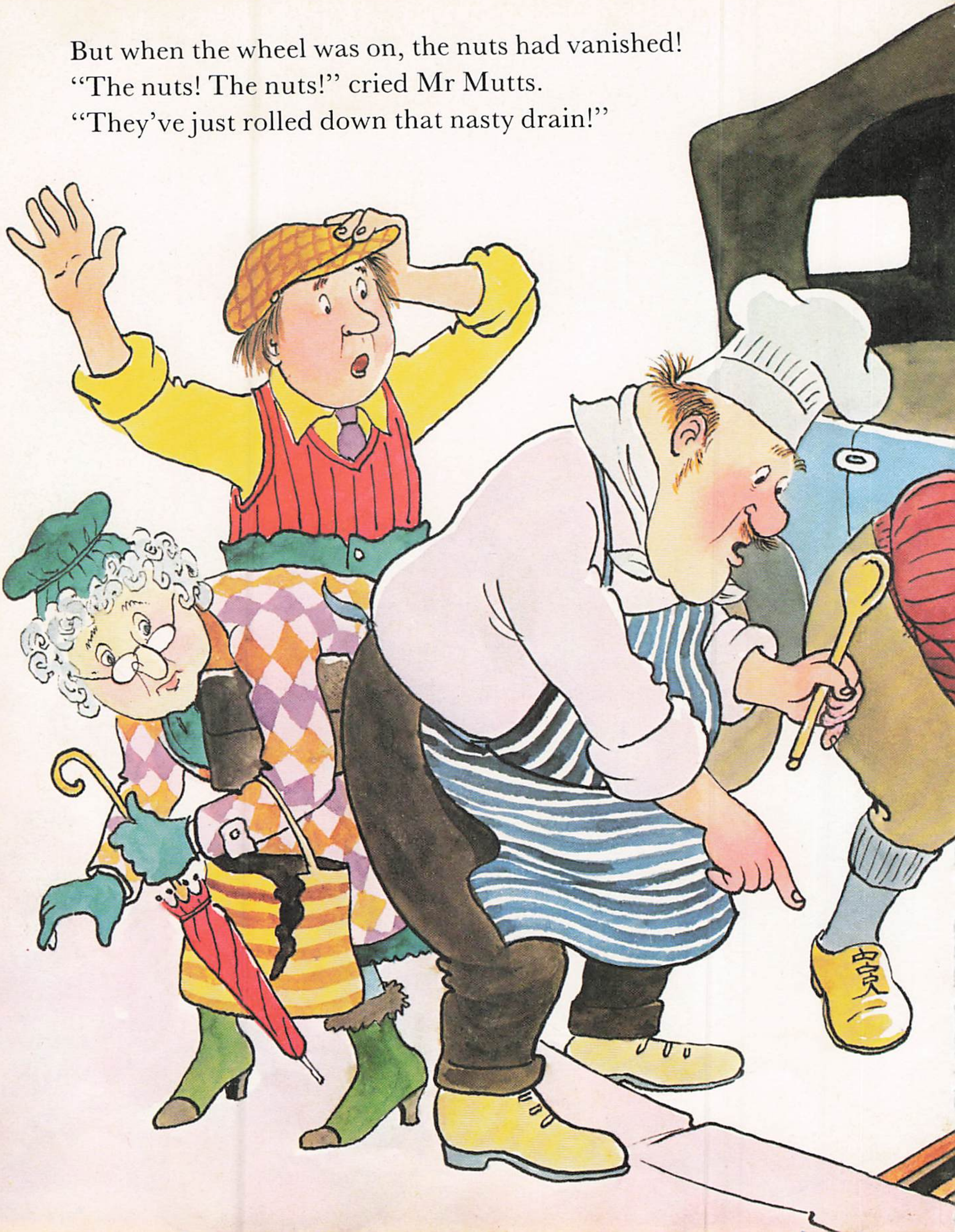


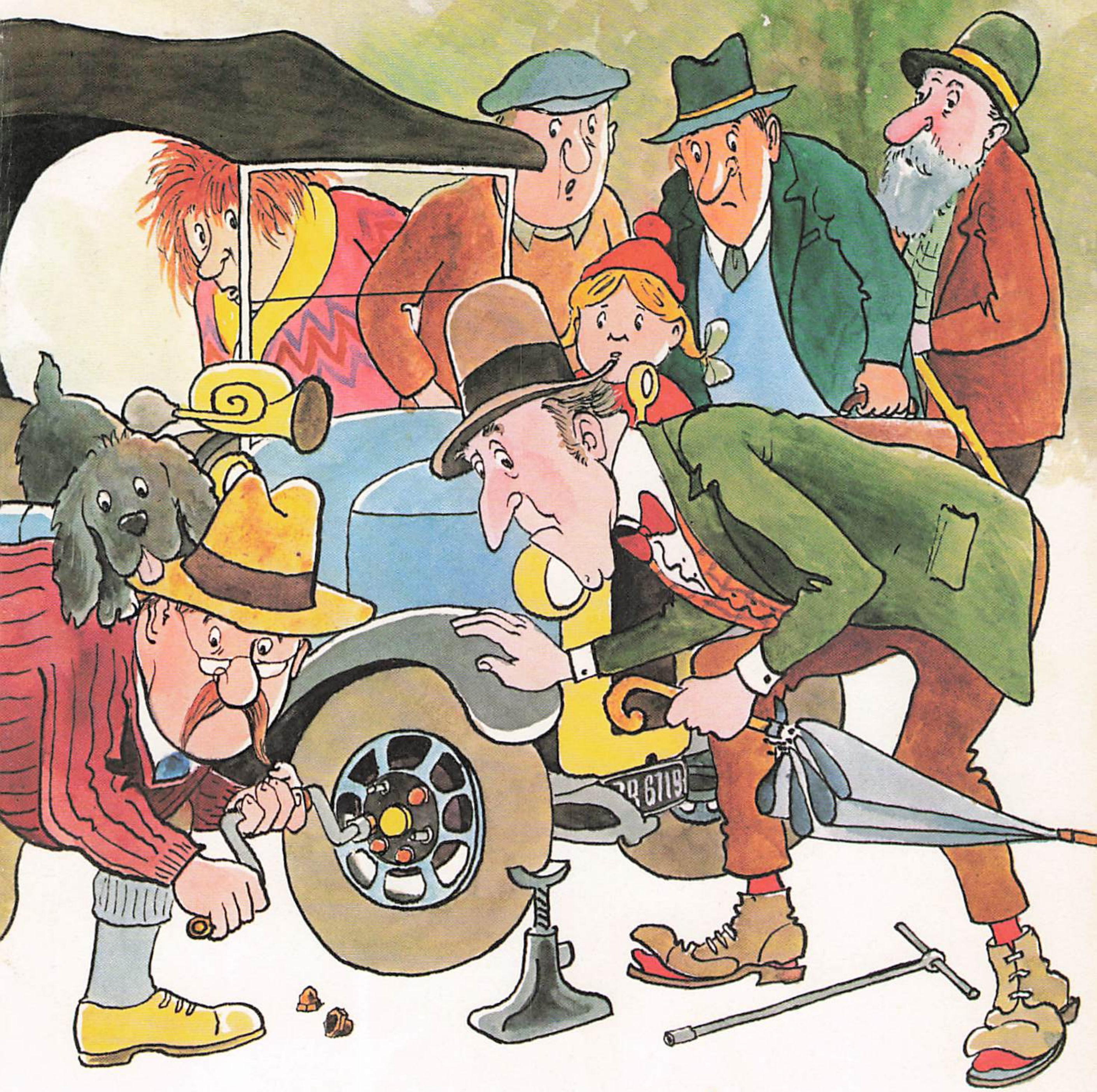
So they all hopped in and with a hoot Gumdrop went his way.
Suddenly, there was a BANG! and people jumped with fright.

"Your tyre's bust!" cried Mr Dyer.
So they all hopped out and changed the wheel.
The nuts were on the ground.

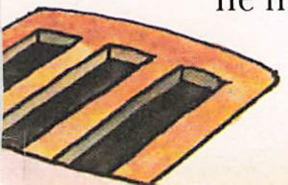


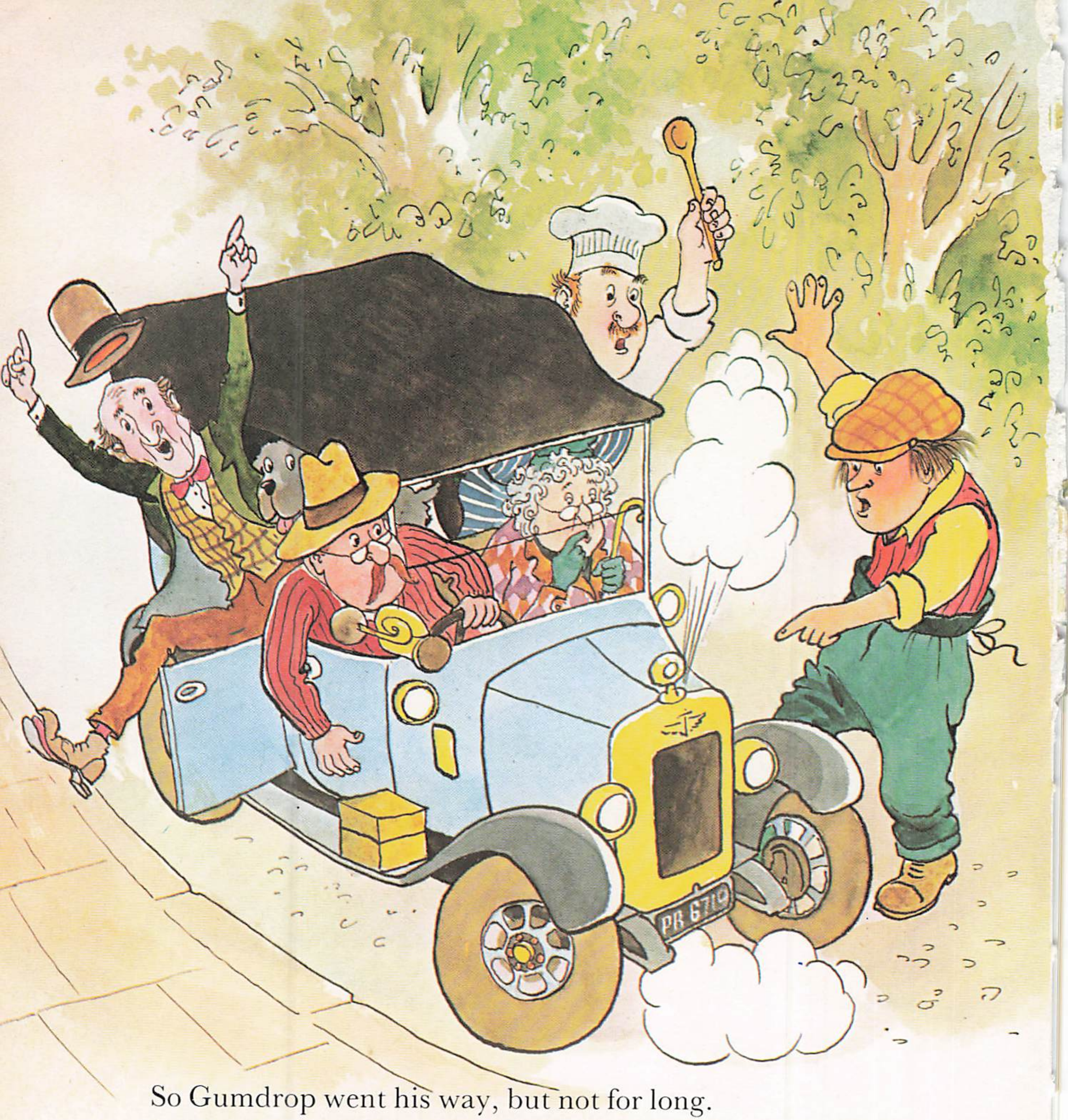
But when the wheel was on, the nuts had vanished!
"The nuts! The nuts!" cried Mr Mutts.
"They've just rolled down that nasty drain!"





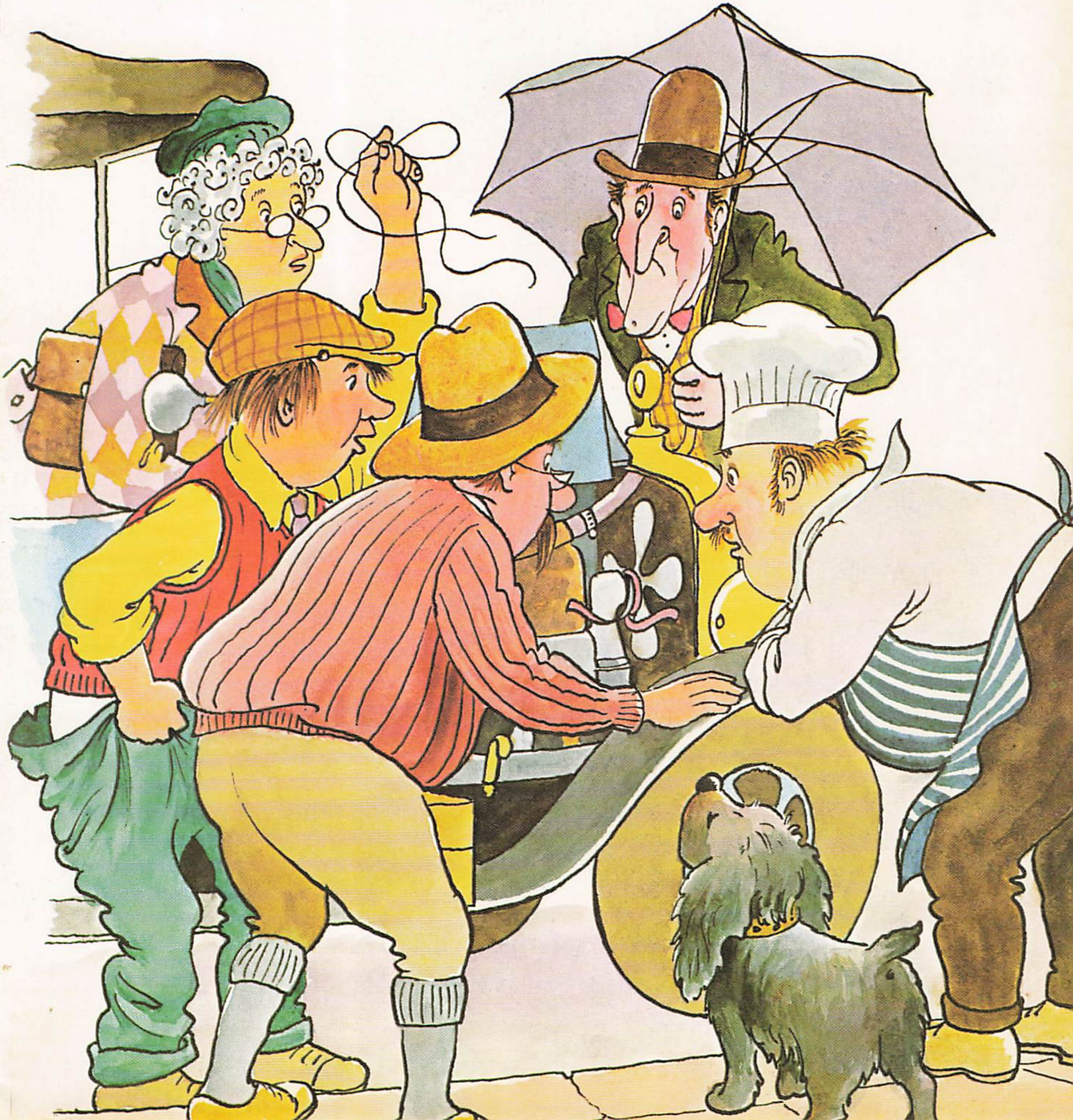
Mr Oldcastle had some others, but they were old and rusty.
"I hope they'll hold all right,"
he muttered as he put them on the wheel.

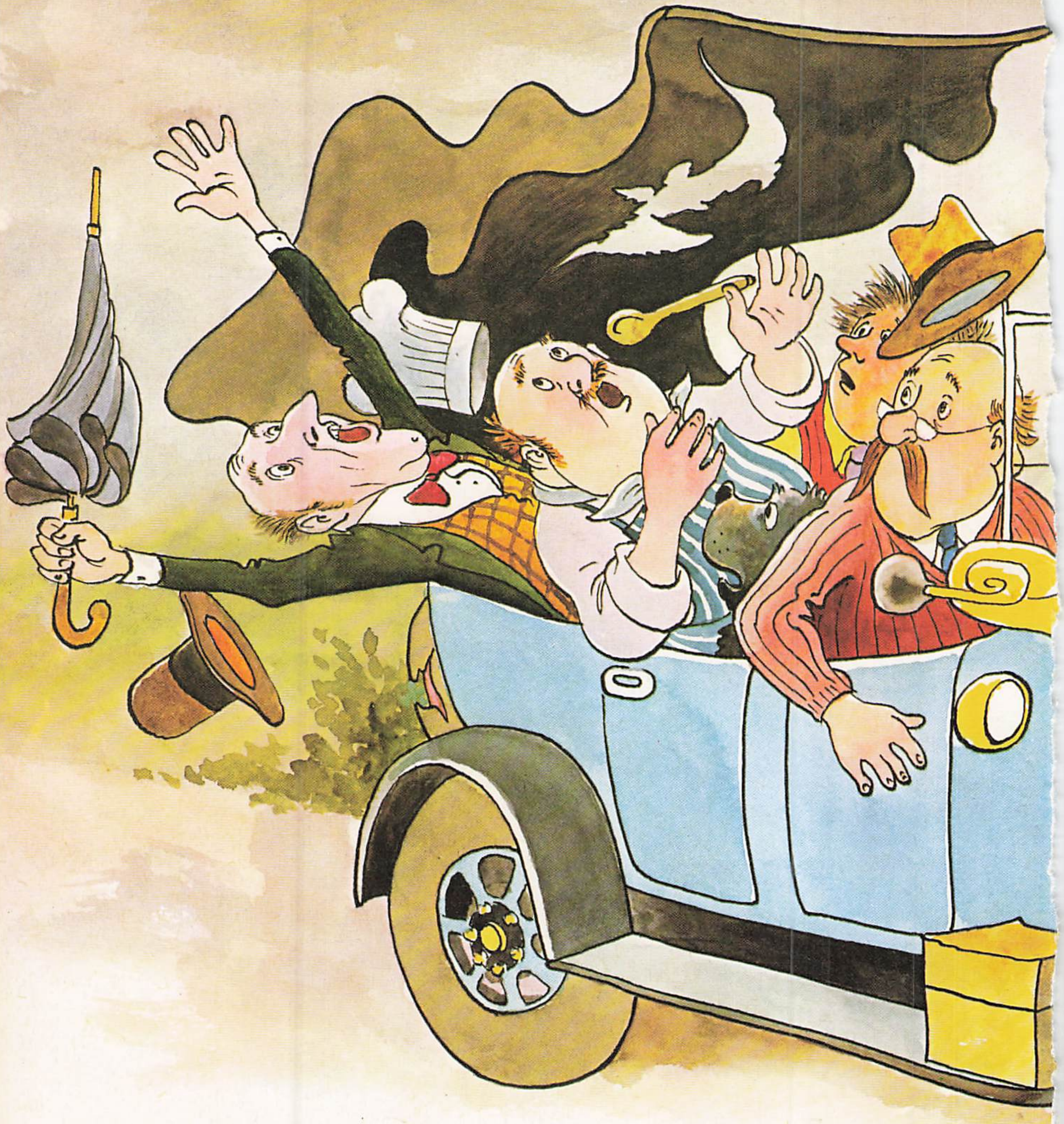




So Gumdrop went his way, but not for long.
Suddenly there was a HISS! and in a cloud of steam his engine stopped.
"Your fan belt must have bust!" cried Stan.
So they all hopped out again.

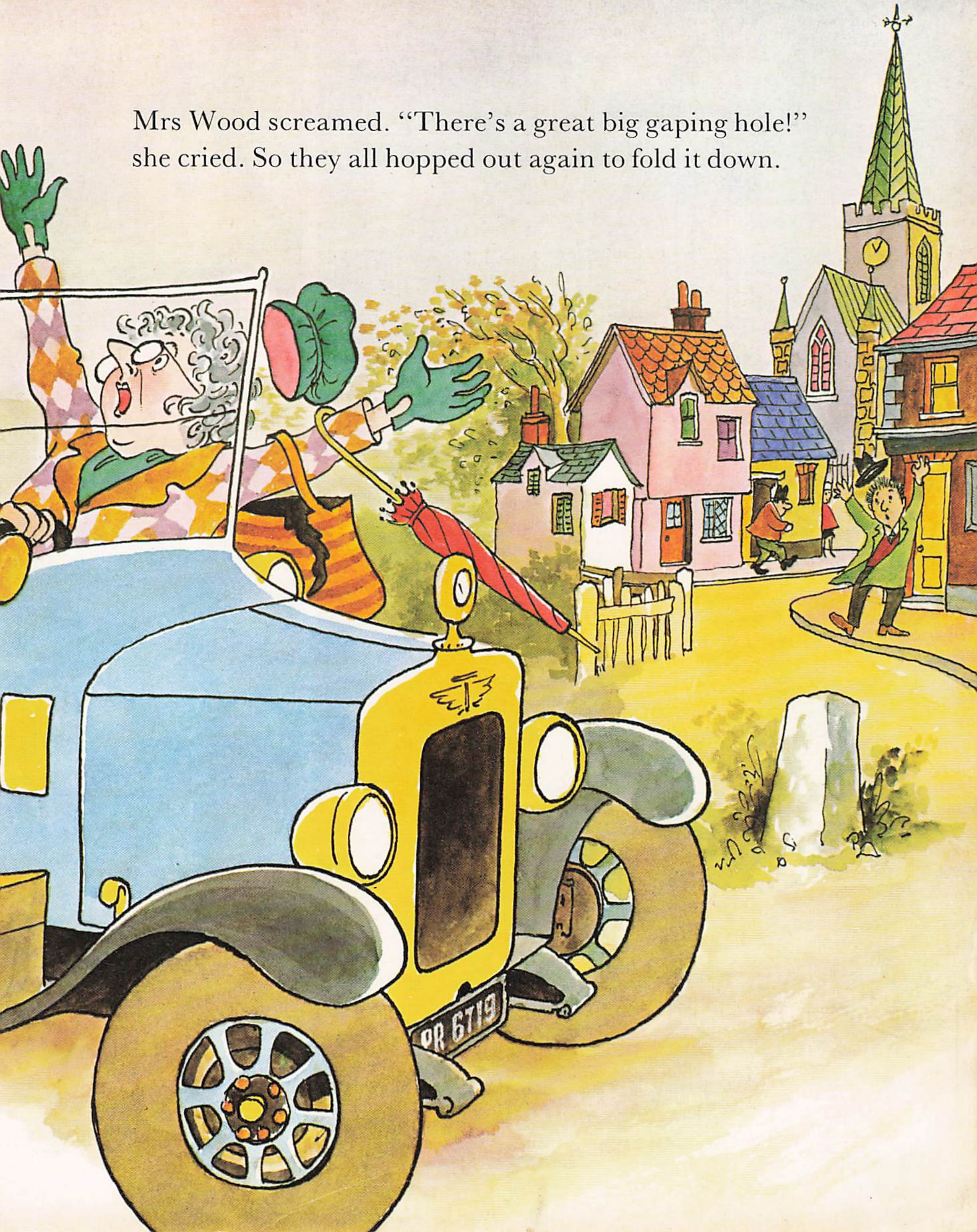
"And I haven't got another belt," said Mr Oldcastle. "But I have some string!" said Stan, so they tied it round the fan, and went their way.

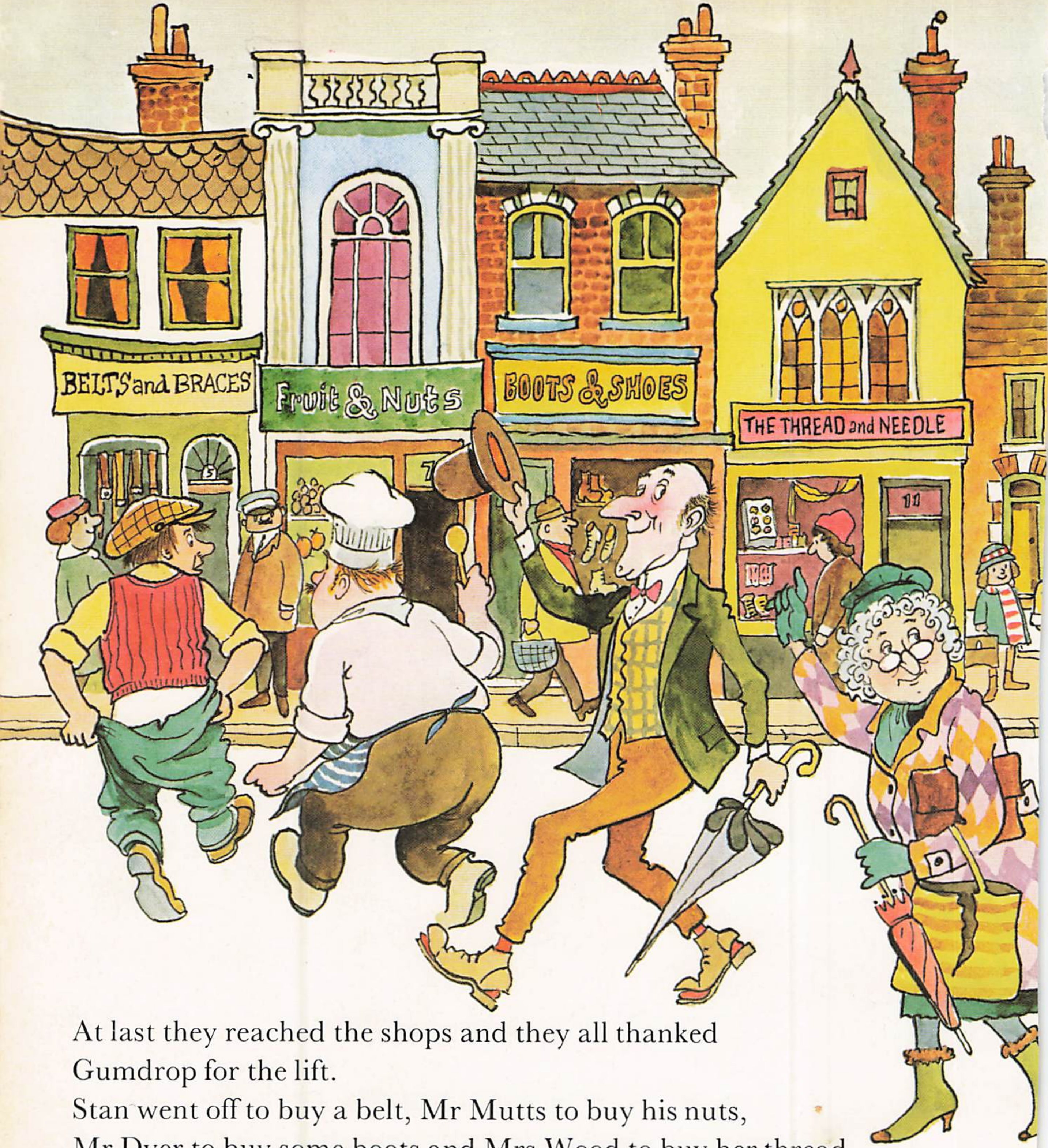




They drove fast to reach the shops in time. Suddenly there was a FLOPP! as a gust of wind tore up the hood.

Mrs Wood screamed. "There's a great big gaping hole!" she cried. So they all hopped out again to fold it down.



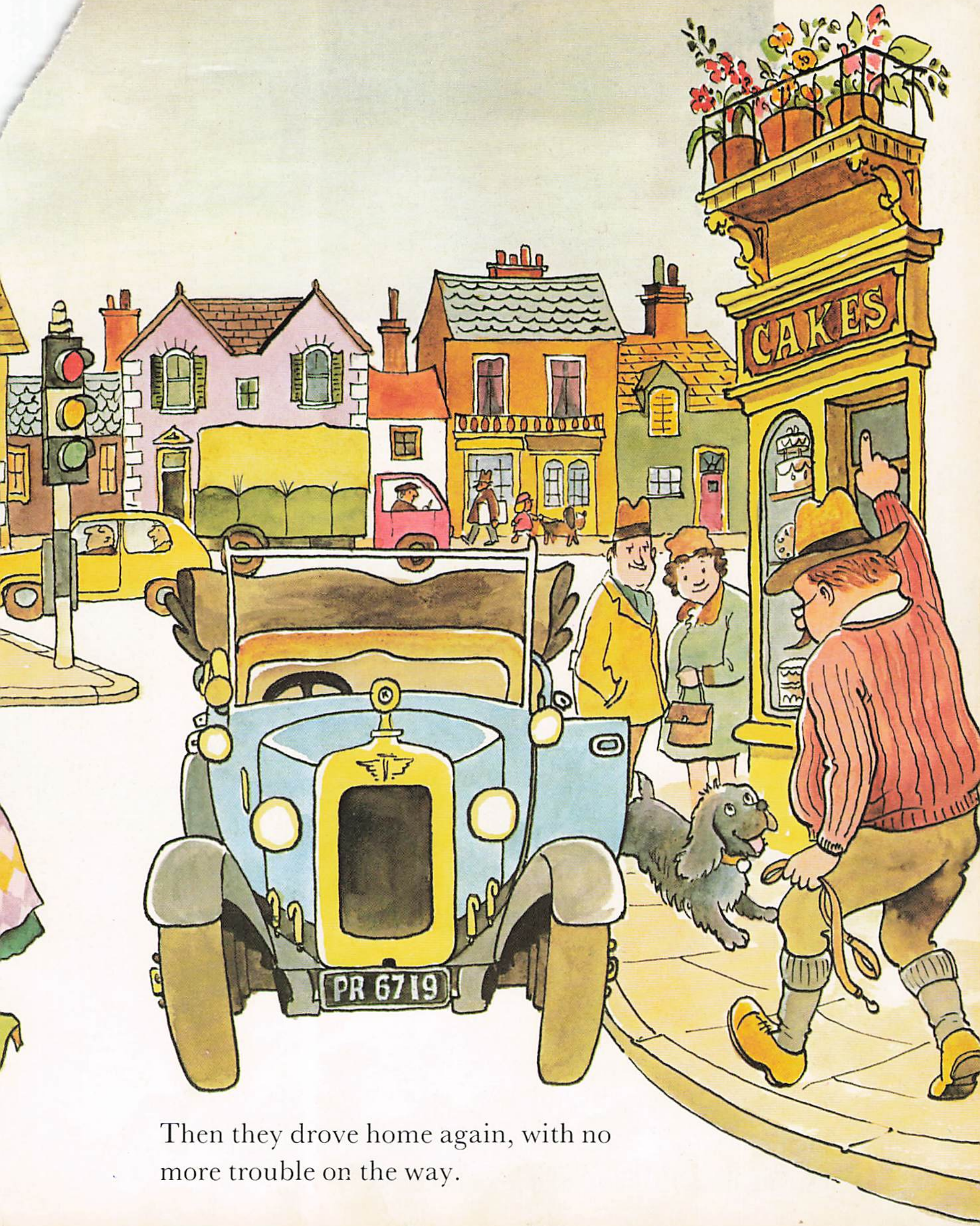

BELTS and BRACES
Fruit & Nuts
BOOTS & SHOES
THE THREAD and NEEDLE
5
7
11

At last they reached the shops and they all thanked Gumdrop for the lift.

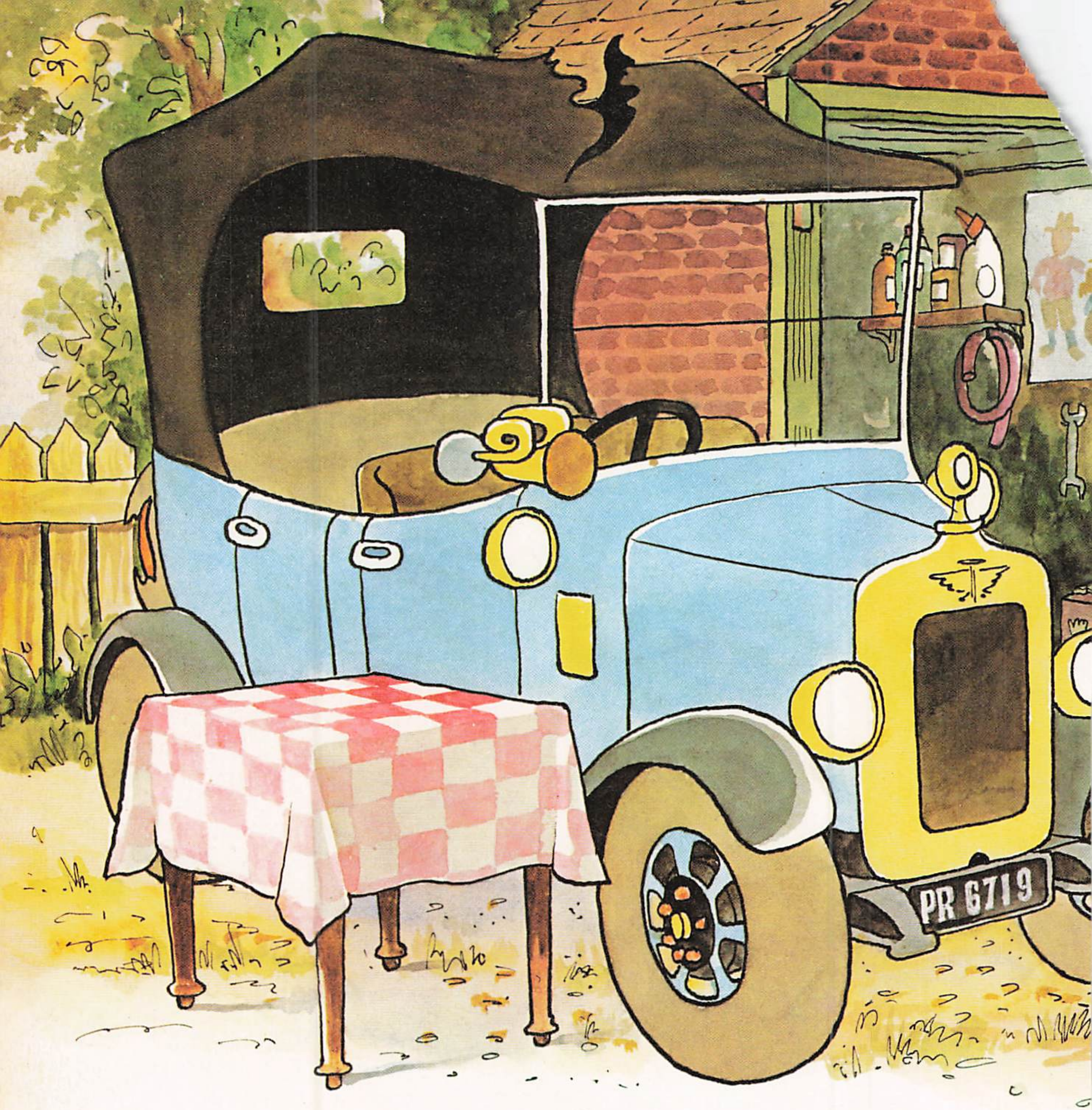
Stan went off to buy a belt, Mr Mutts to buy his nuts, Mr Dyer to buy some boots and Mrs Wood to buy her thread.

"And we must buy a cake for Gumdrop," said Mr Oldcastle.

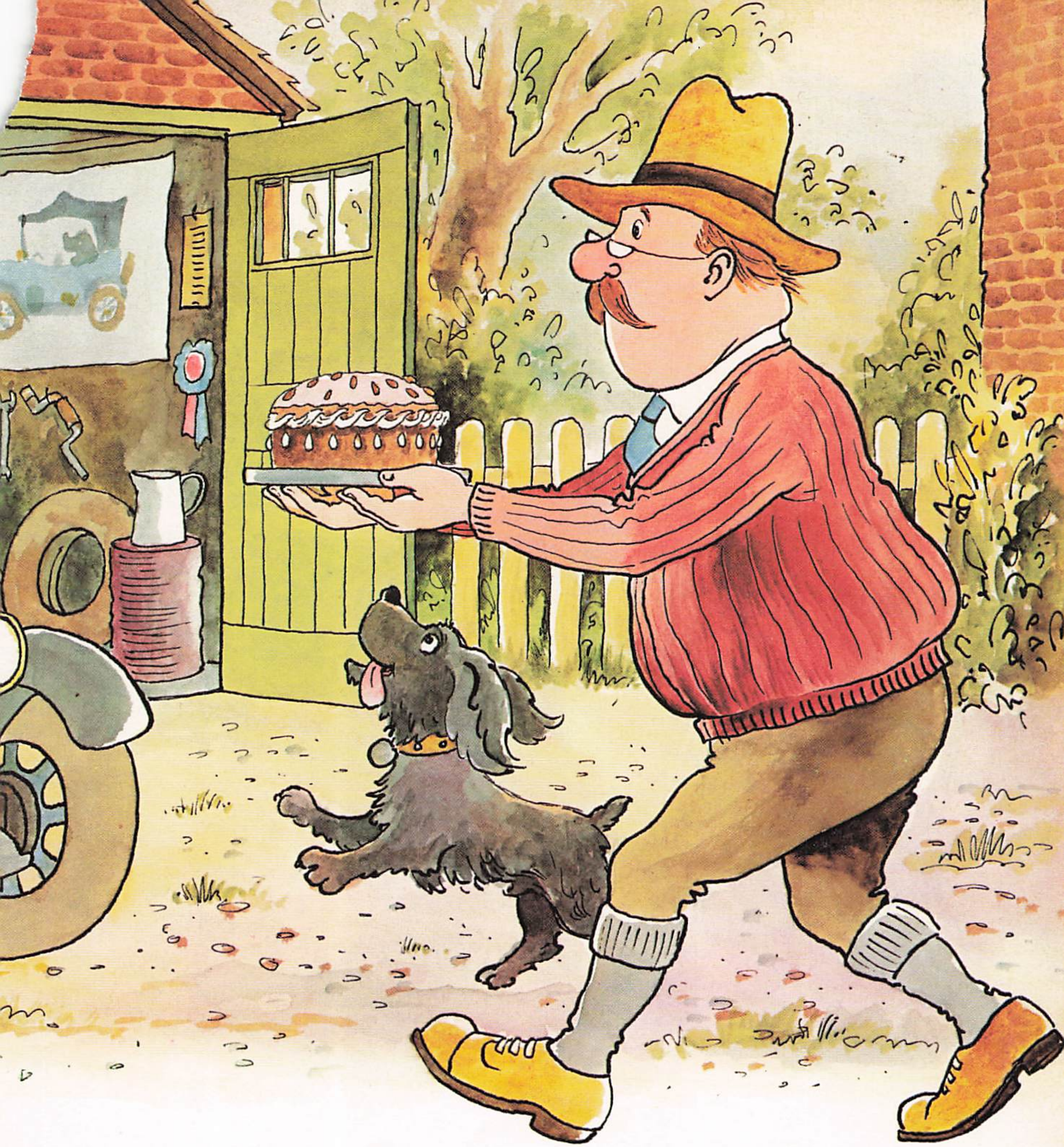
Horace hopped out and barked. He liked cakes.


CAKES
PR 6719

Then they drove home again, with no more trouble on the way.

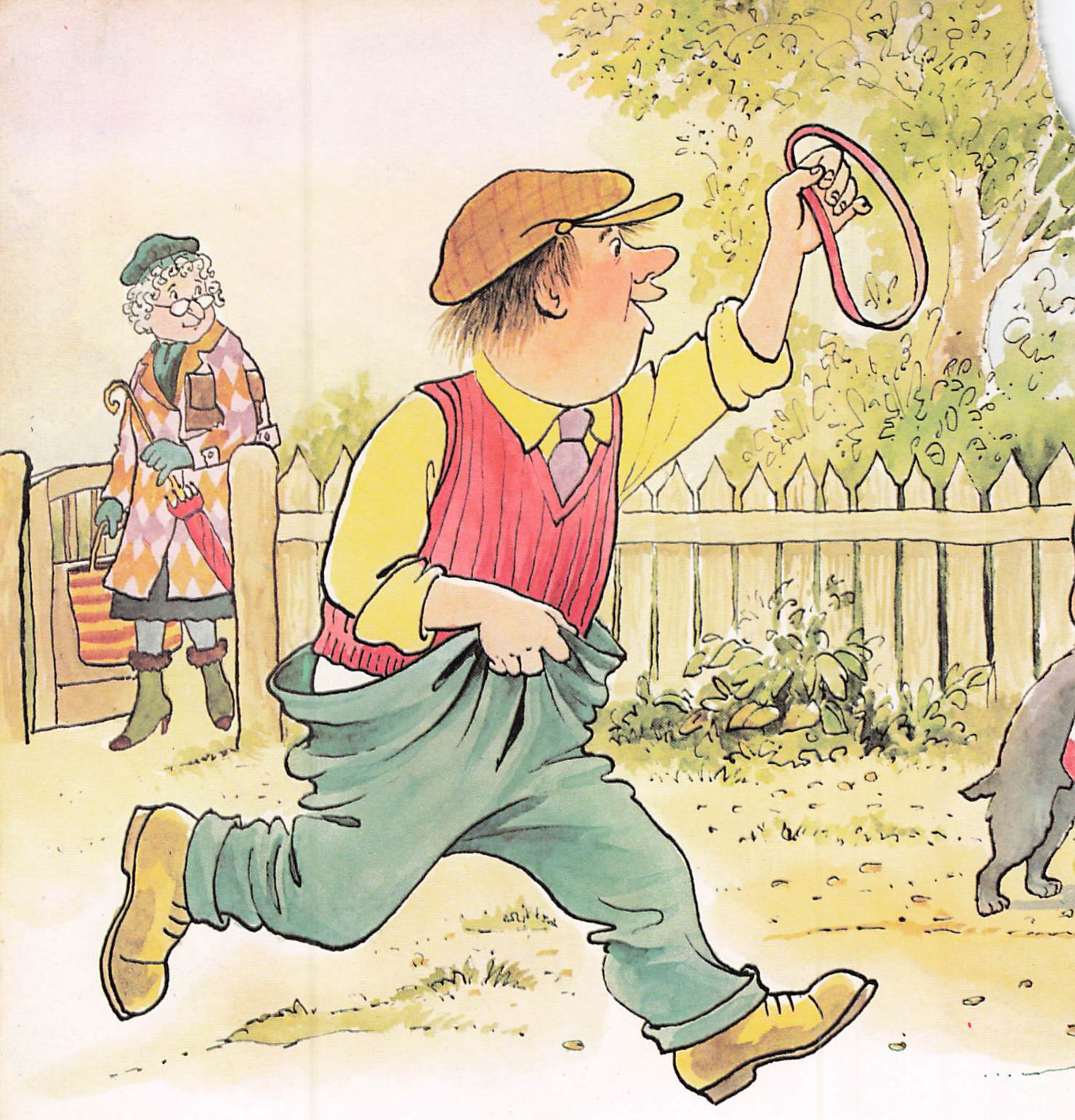


Next day was Gumdrop's birthday.
There he stood, with a bust tyre, some old and rusty nuts,
a string for a belt and a hole in his hood.

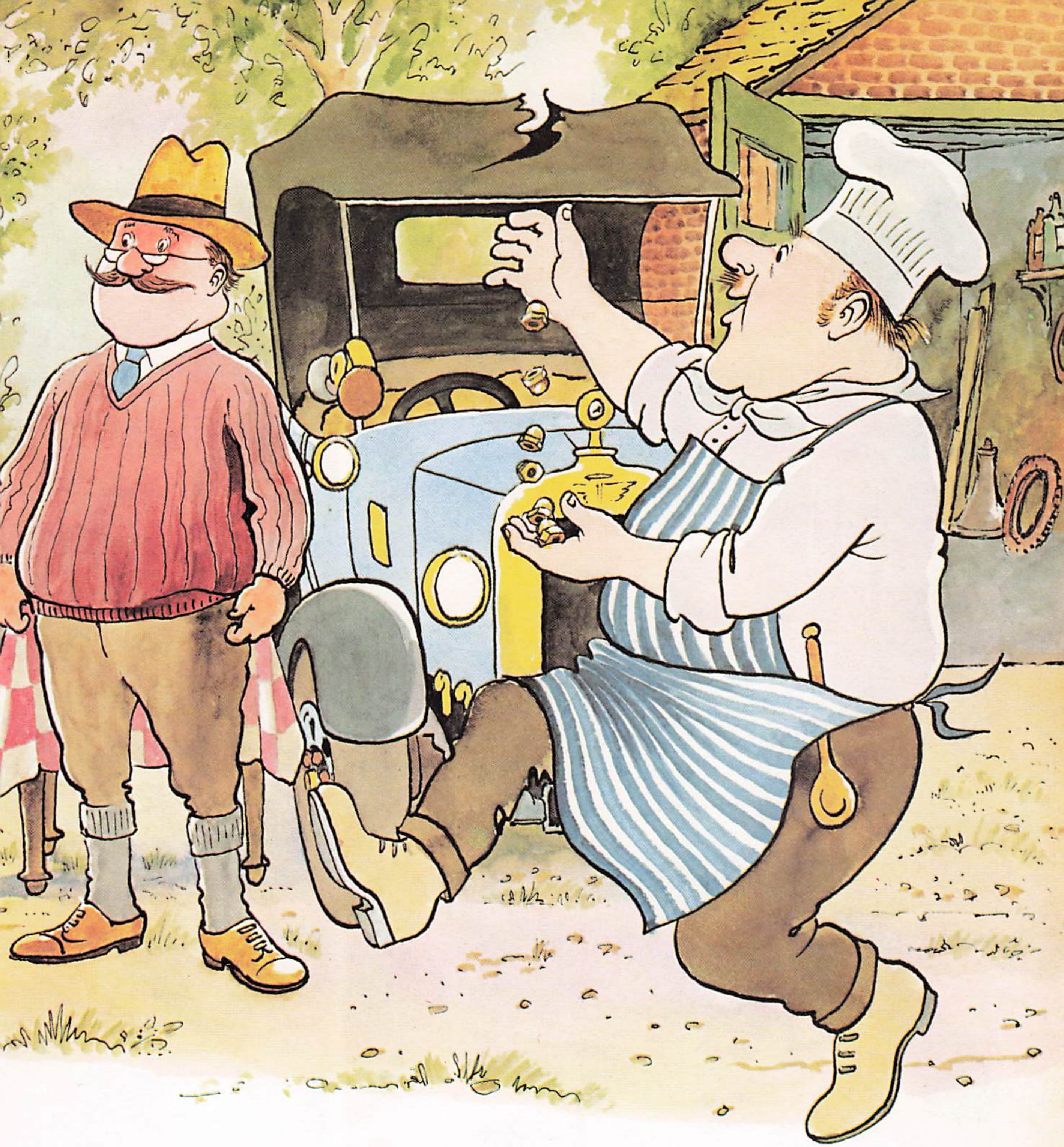


"But at least you have a birthday cake," said Mr Oldcastle, as he put it on a table by the side.

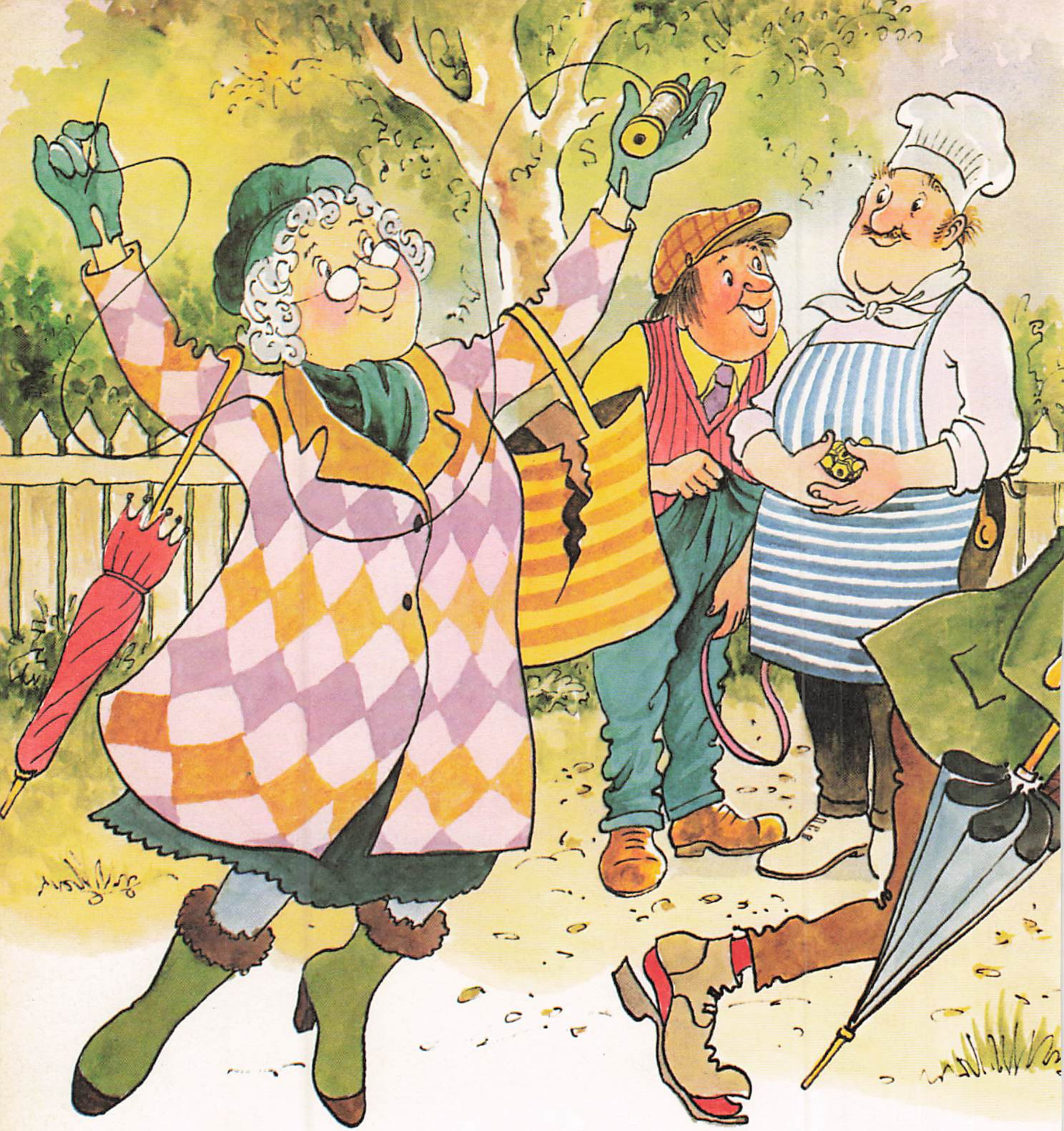
Horace barked. He liked cakes.



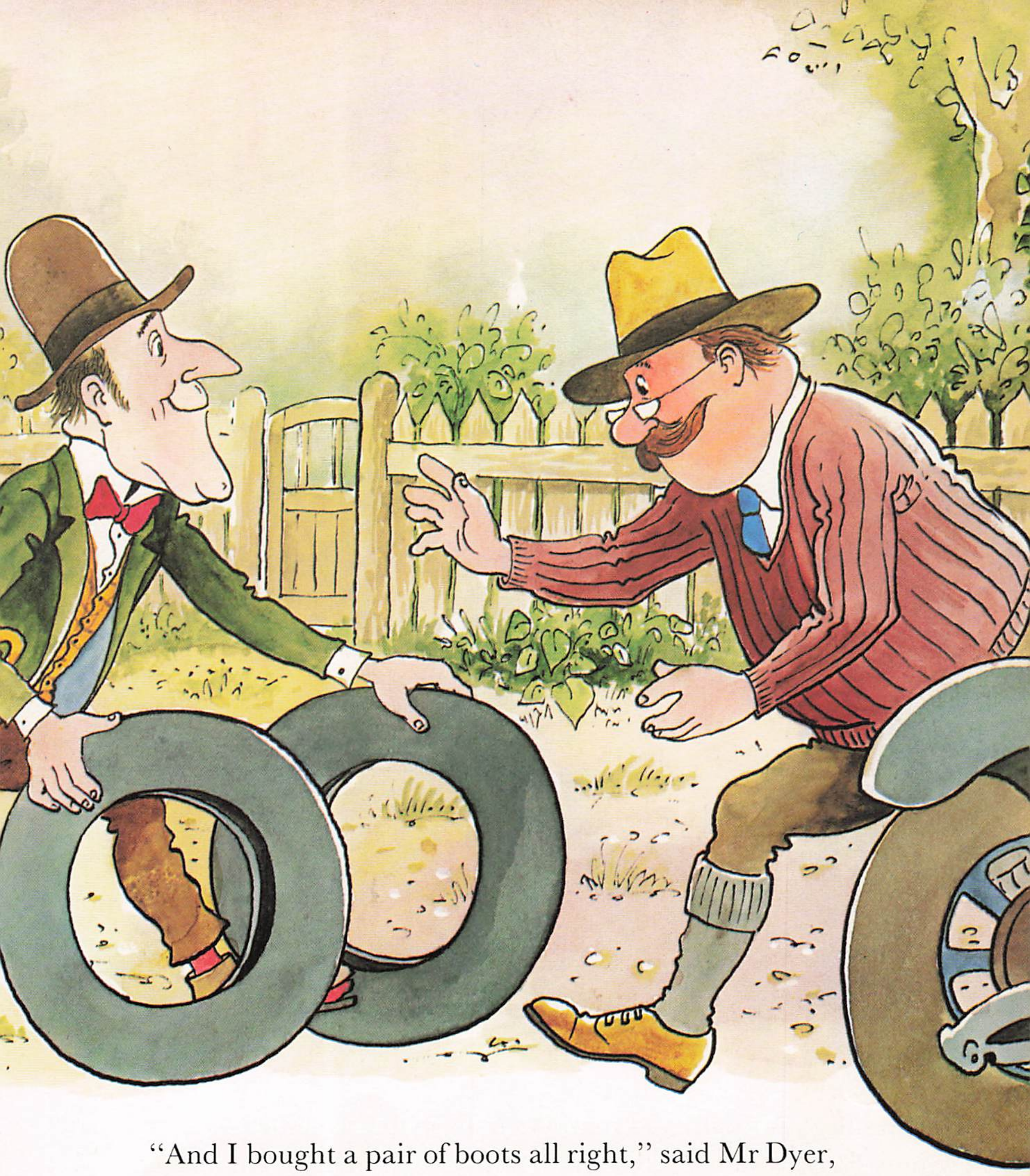
And then the party guests arrived.
"Did you get your shopping?" asked Mr Oldcastle.
"Yes, I bought a belt all right," said Stan, "but it is for Gumdrop's fan. And may this fan belt never bust!"



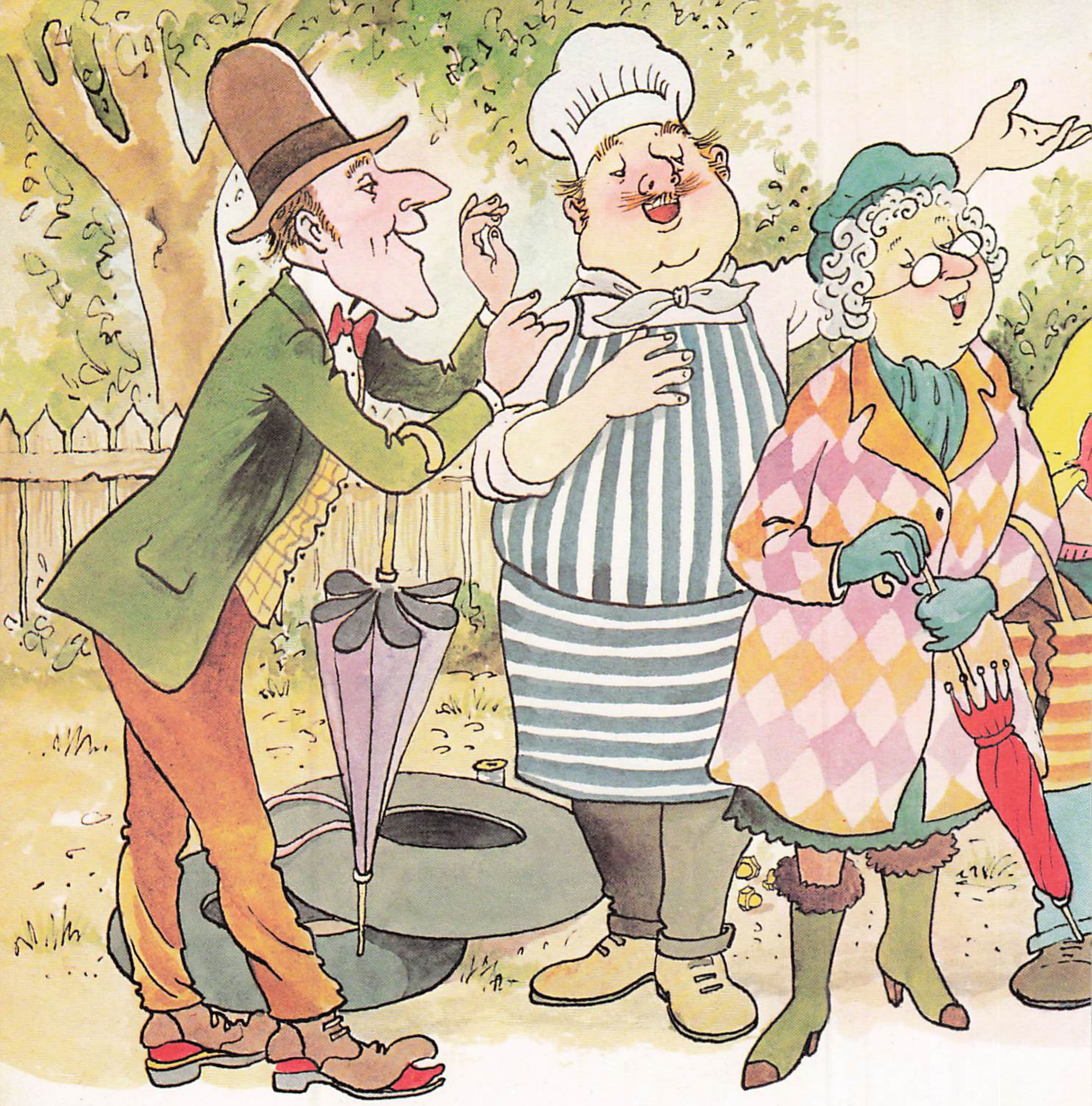
"And I bought some nuts all right," said Mr Mutts, "but they are for Gumdrop's wheel. And may they never roll away!"



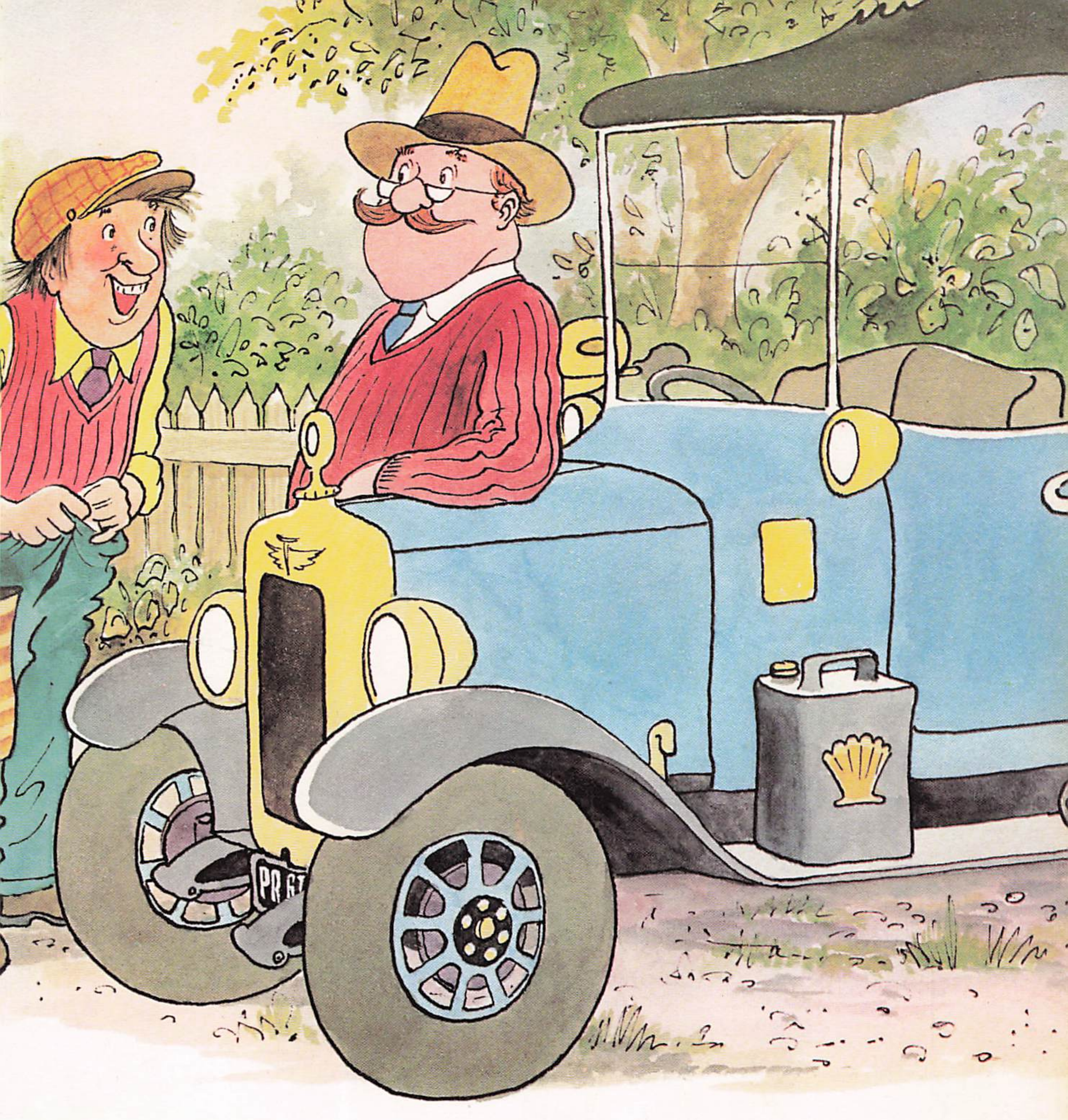
“And I bought the thread all right,” said Mrs Wood, “but it is for mending Gumdrop’s hood. And may it never tear again!”



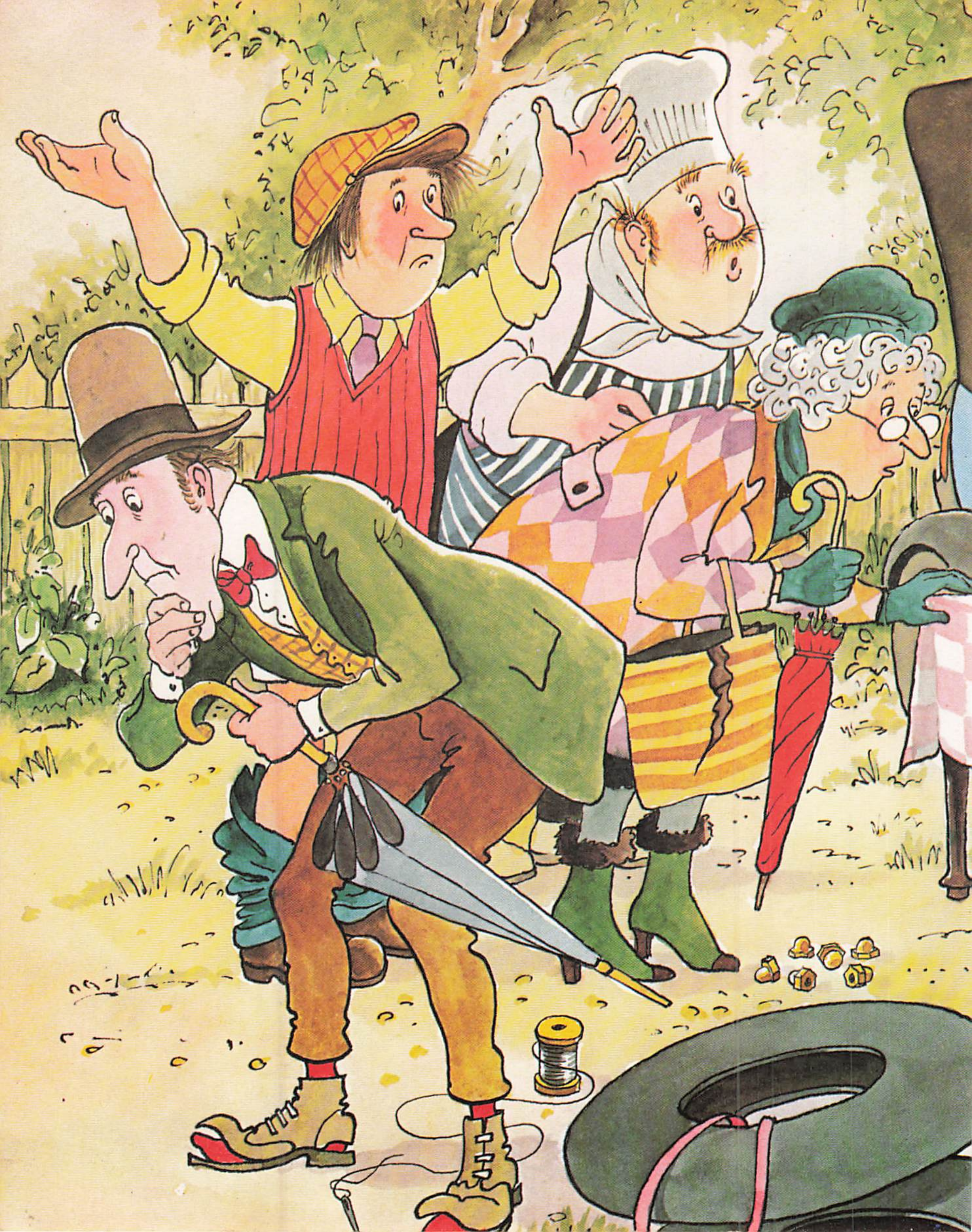
"And I bought a pair of boots all right," said Mr Dyer, "but boots for Gumdrop are really tyres. And may they never get a puncture!"

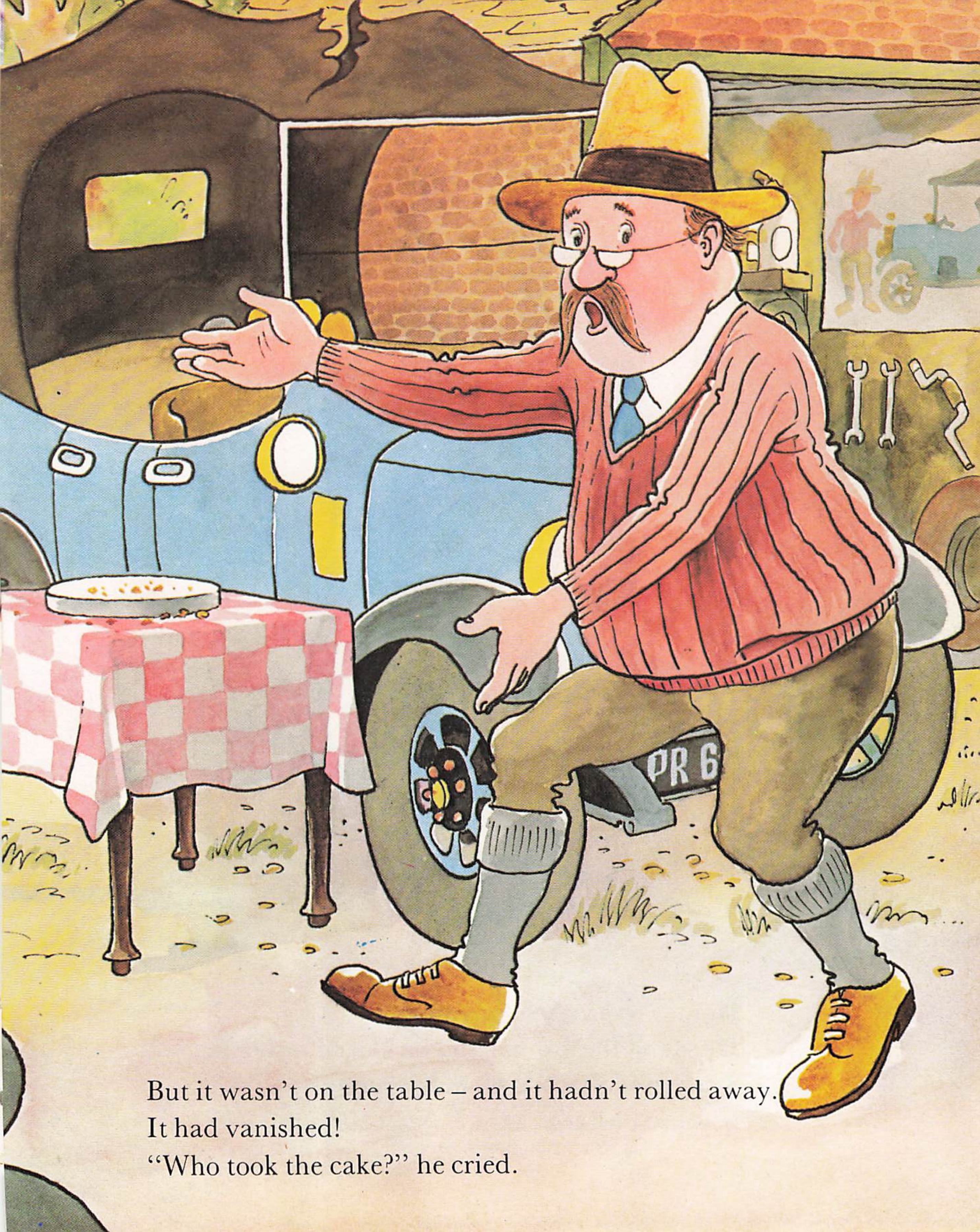


Then the guests gathered round Gumdrop to wish him
Many Happy Returns and another fifty years of happy motoring.
"For he's a jolly good fellow," they sang, and
"Happy birthday, dear Gumdrop, happy birthday to you!"

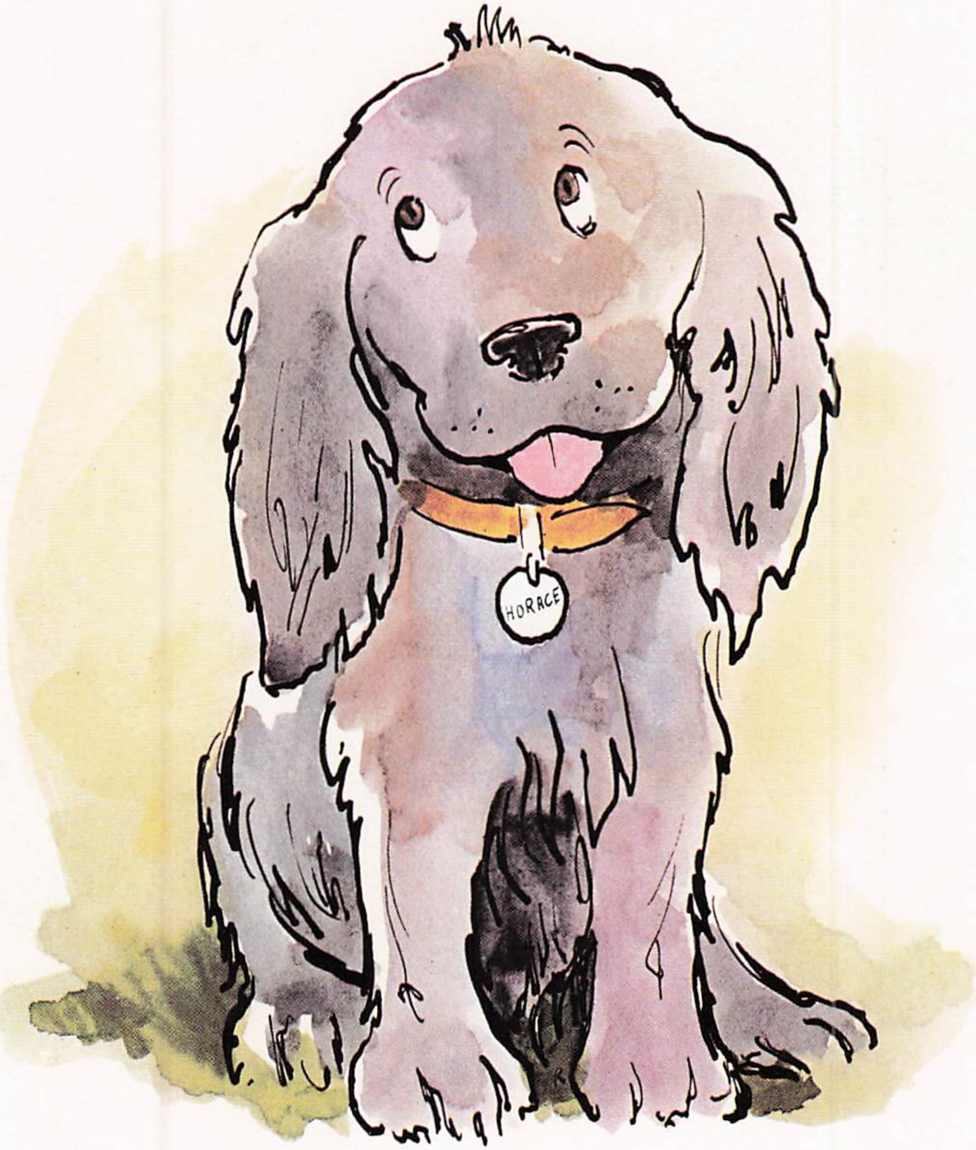


Mr Oldcastle was very happy and he thanked them all
for Gumdrop's sake.
"And here is the birthday cake!" he said.

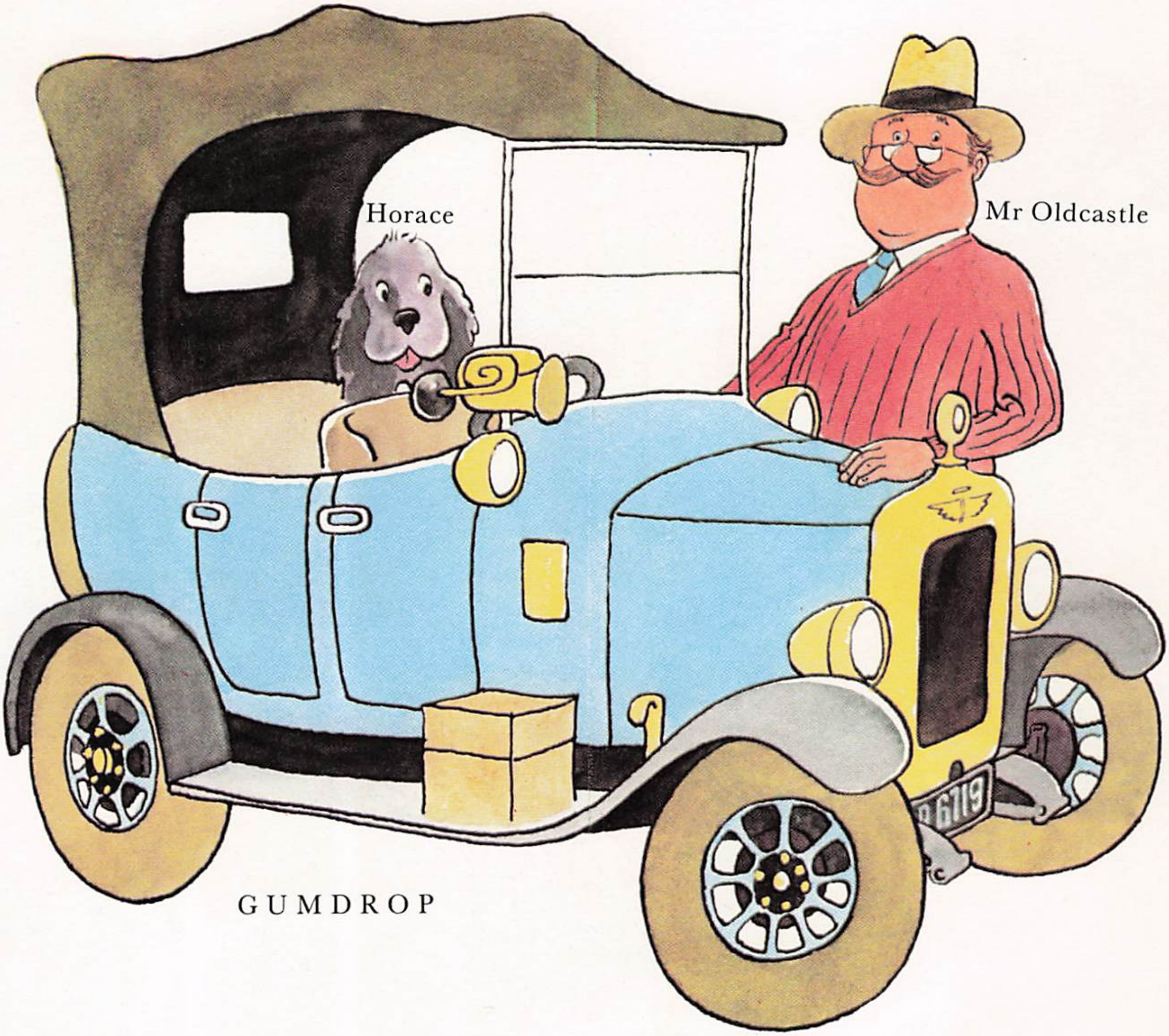




But it wasn't on the table – and it hadn't rolled away.
It had vanished!
"Who took the cake?" he cried.



Horace was very happy too.
He sat on the ground and he looked rather fat.
There wasn't a crumb to be seen,
because he liked cakes.


Horace
Mr Oldcastle
GUMDROP
D 6719

Gumdrop has a Birthday
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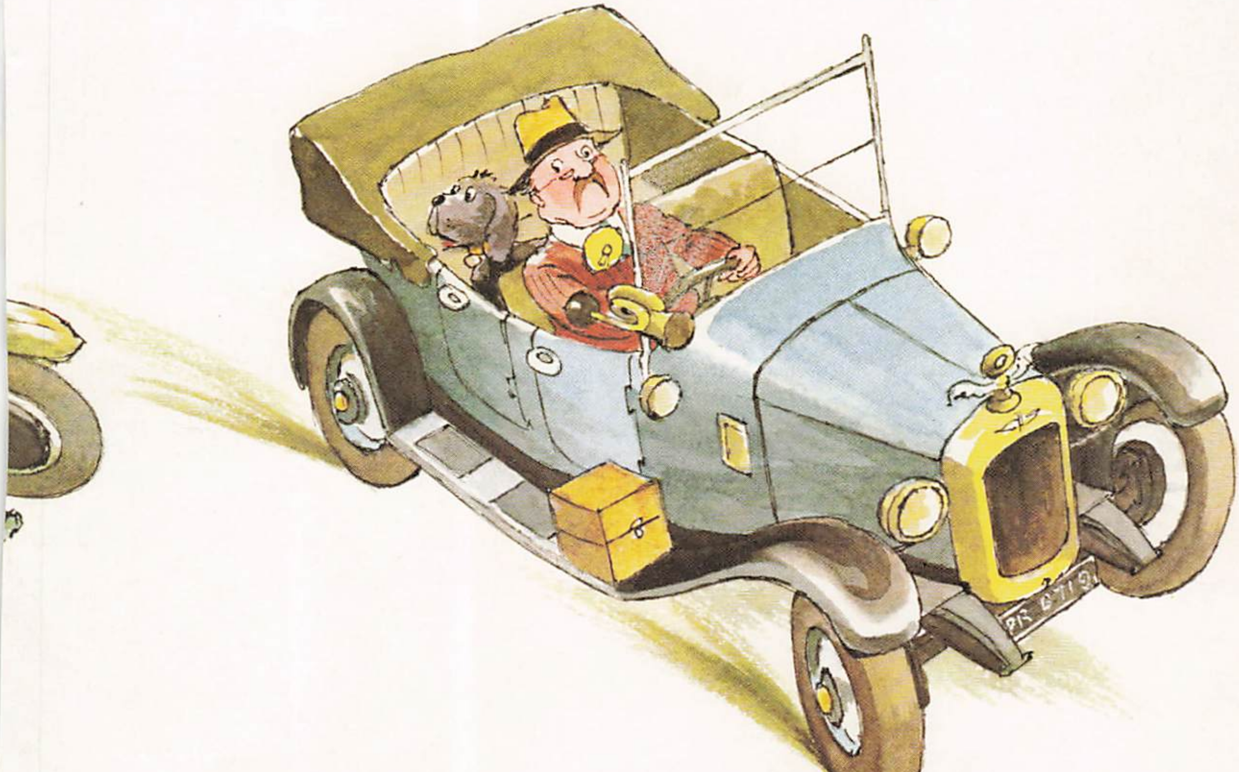
For Mimi
with my love

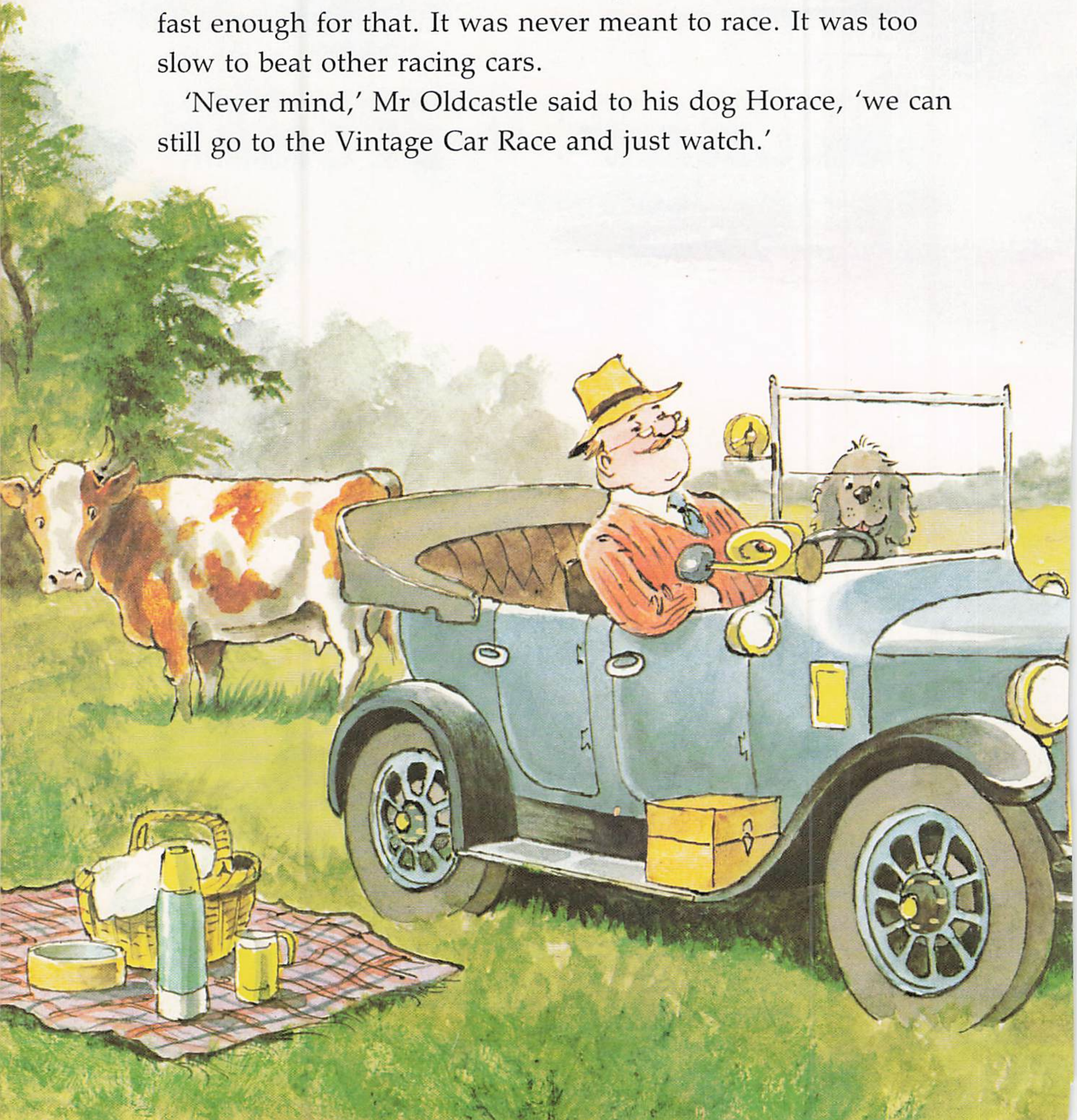
GUMDROP AND THE SECRET SWITCHES

Story and pictures by Val Biro



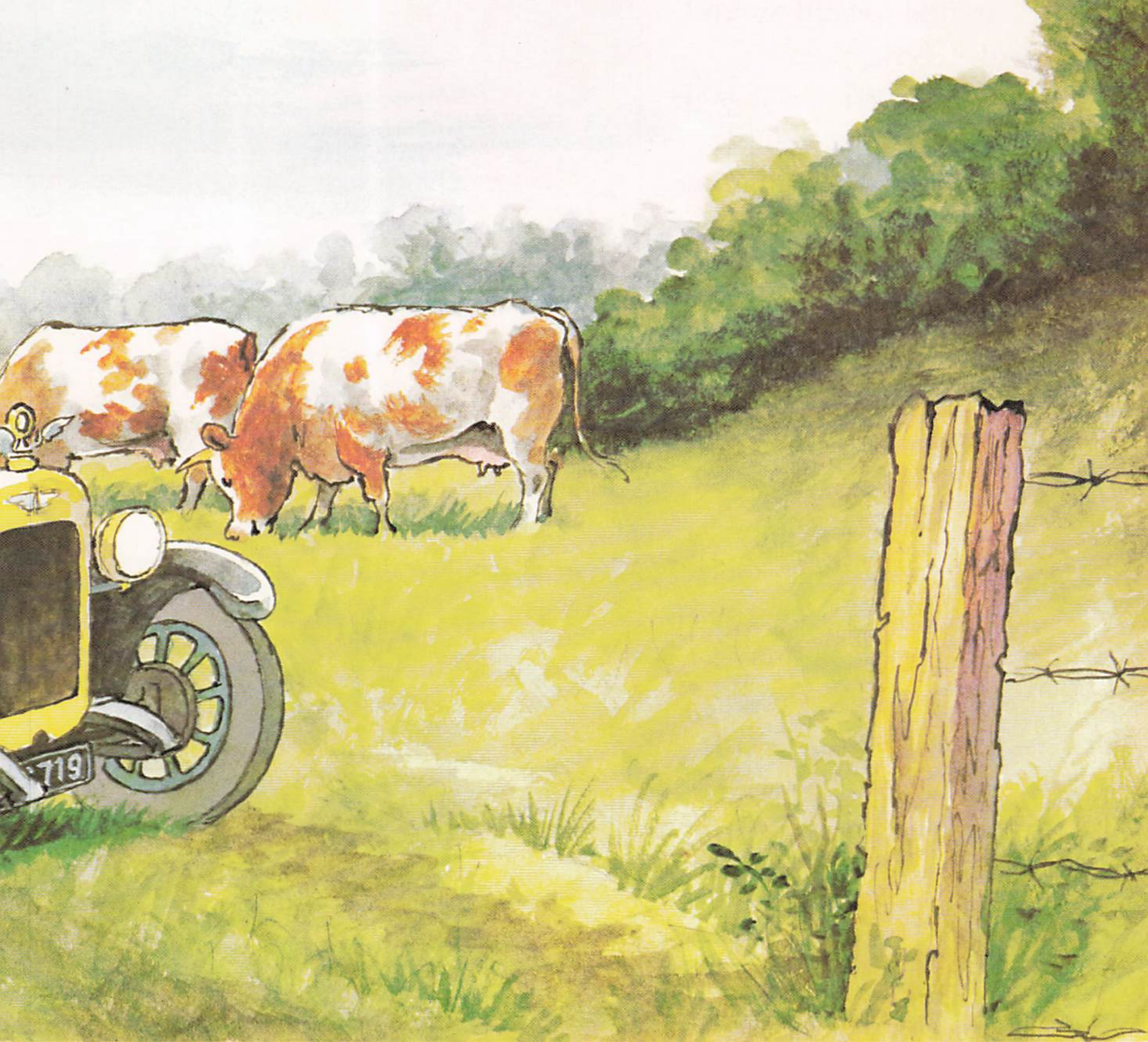
MR JOSIAH OLDCASTLE had a blue vintage car called Gumdrop. For him it was the best car in the world: it was strong and safe and beautiful. But there was just one thing. Mr Oldcastle would have loved to enter Gumdrop in a race, but his car was not fast enough for that. It was never meant to race. It was too slow to beat other racing cars.

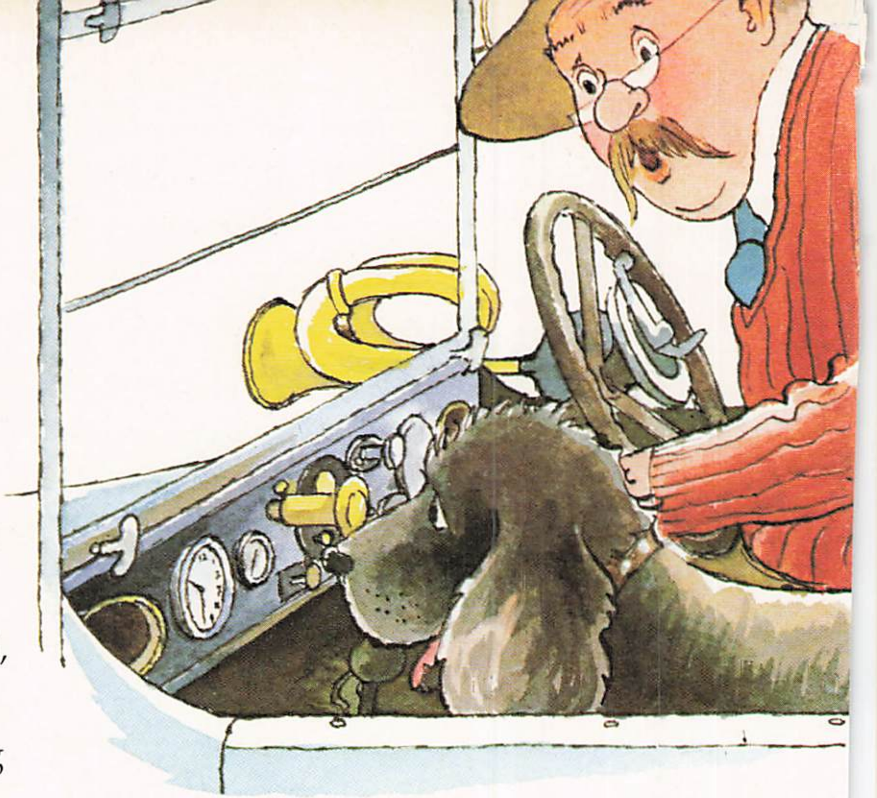
'Never mind,' Mr Oldcastle said to his dog Horace, 'we can still go to the Vintage Car Race and just watch.'



So it was that on a fine July morning they were on their way to see a race. There was time enough, so they stopped in a peaceful meadow for a picnic which they had both enjoyed very much.

How pleasant it was, thought Mr Oldcastle, to sit in the driving seat with Horace beside him, among the grazing cows! He settled back comfortably to enjoy the hot sun for a while.

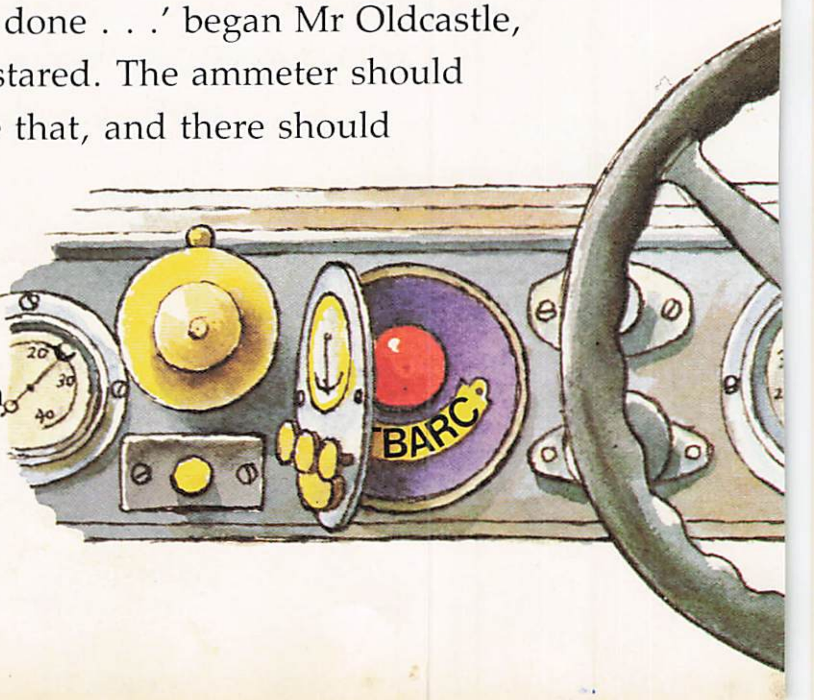




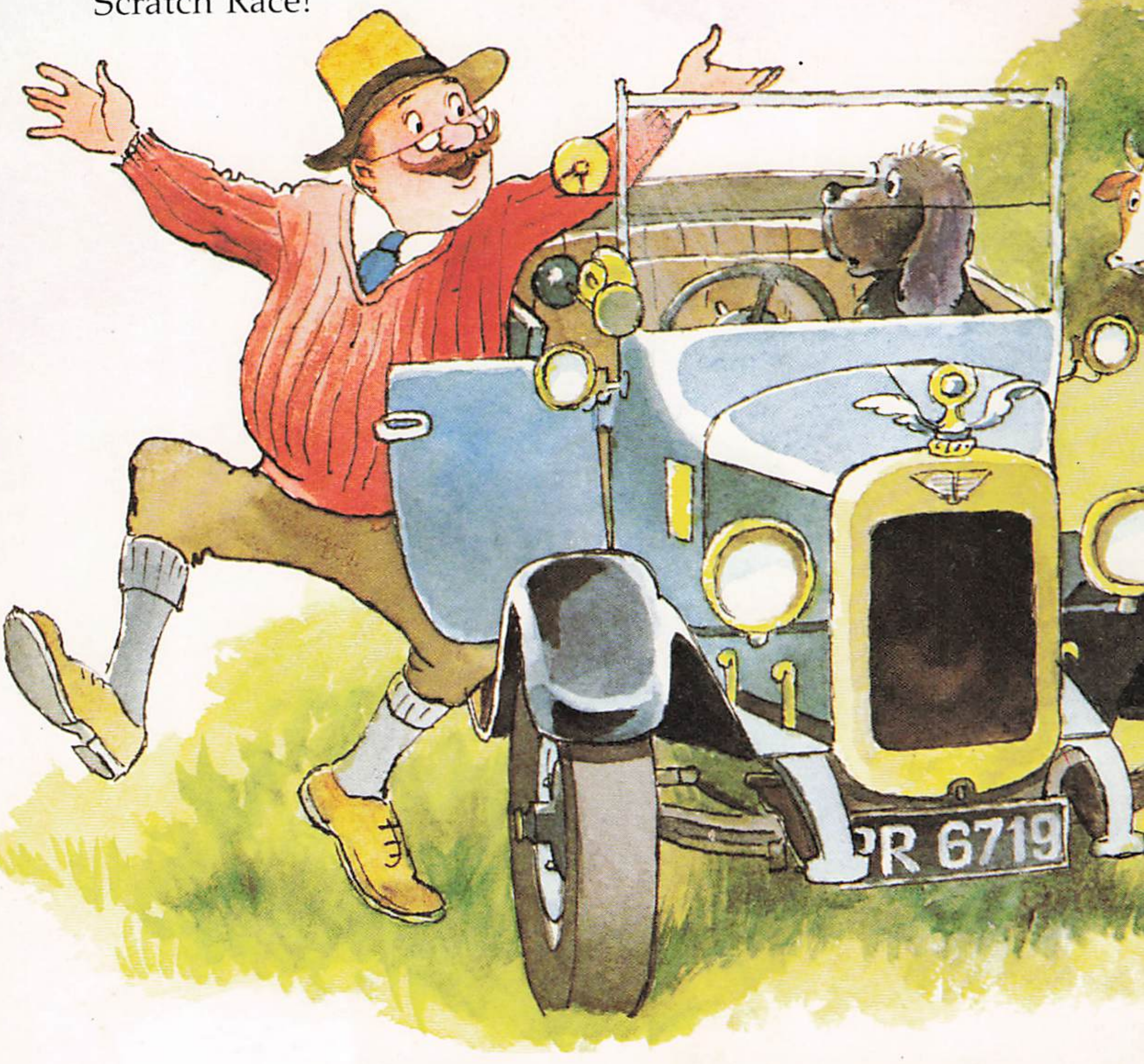
He was just about to doze off when Horace began to behave in a rather extraordinary manner for an animal who was usually so well-behaved. He started to sniff around the controls on Gumdrop's dashboard, pushing and pulling the knobs and uttering excited little barks.

'Stop that at once!' warned Mr Oldcastle. 'You know you must leave the controls alone!' But Horace went on pushing and pulling and barking and, before Mr Oldcastle could stop him, he gave an extra pull and '*Zoinnnng*!' the whole ammeter casing flew open as if on a hinge!

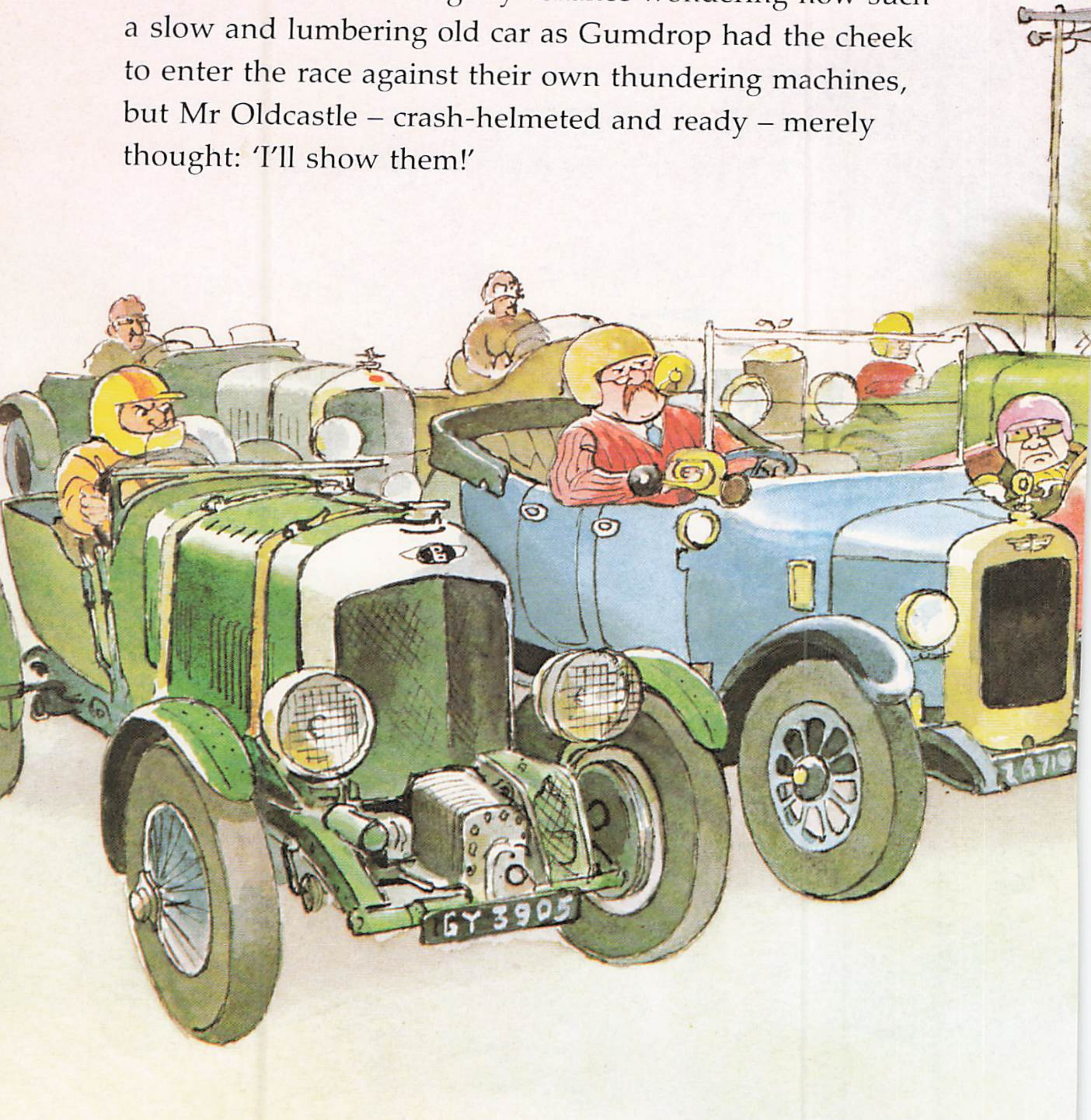
'Now look what you've done . . .' began Mr Oldcastle, but then he stopped and stared. The ammeter should not have hinged open like that, and there should certainly not have been a secret switch hidden behind it. But there was! And the switch had a label under it which said: POTBARC.

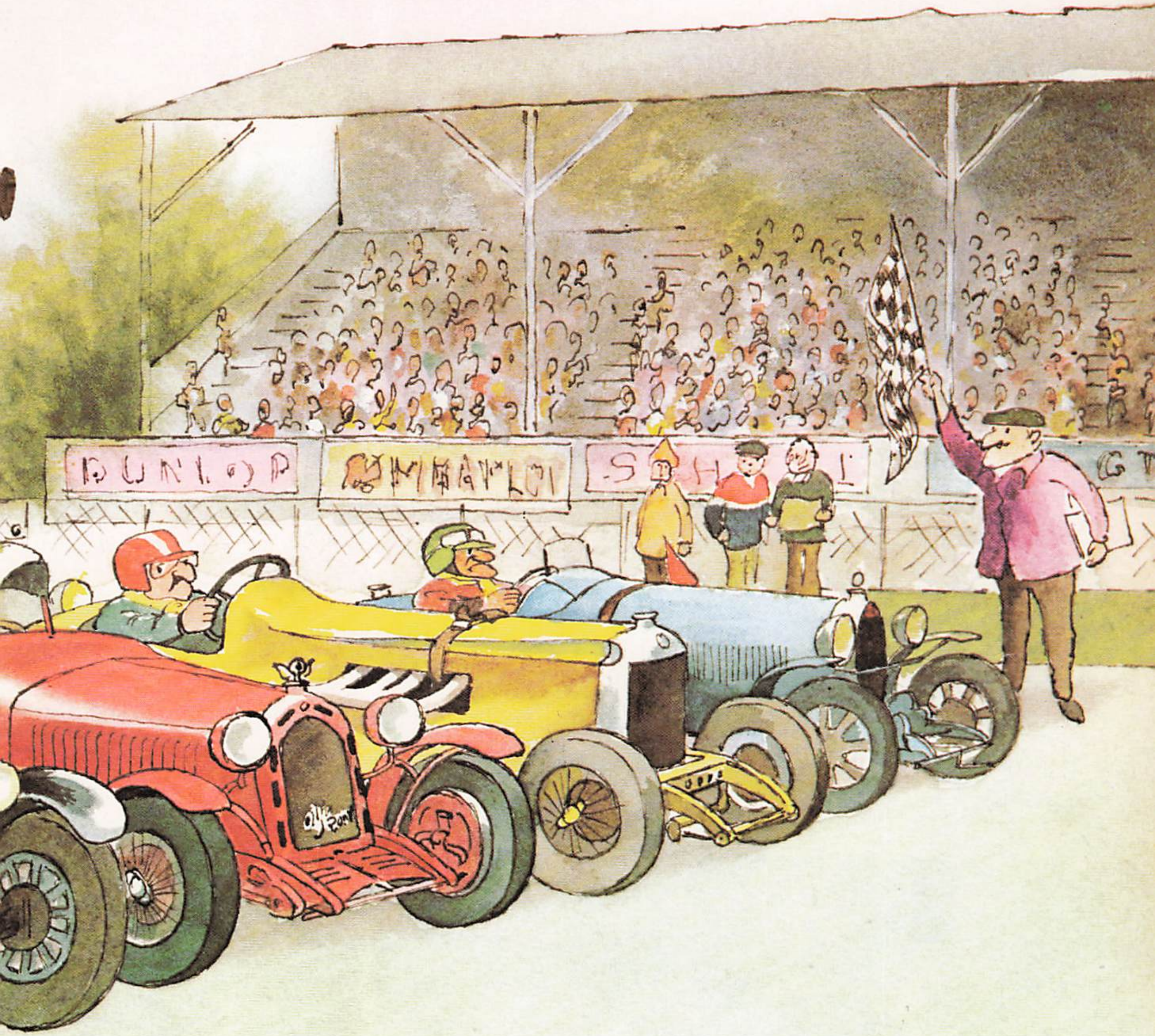


'POTBARC!' shouted Mr Oldcastle and he jumped out of Gumdrop in his excitement. 'Do you know what that means?' – as if Horace could have known the meaning of such a strange word. But Mr Oldcastle knew all right. 'It is short for *Pull Out To Beat Any Racing Car*!' he said, dancing about. 'It means that Gumdrop can go faster than anything, my lad, and it means that we shall go to the race-meeting now and enter Gumdrop in the Allcomers Scratch Race!'

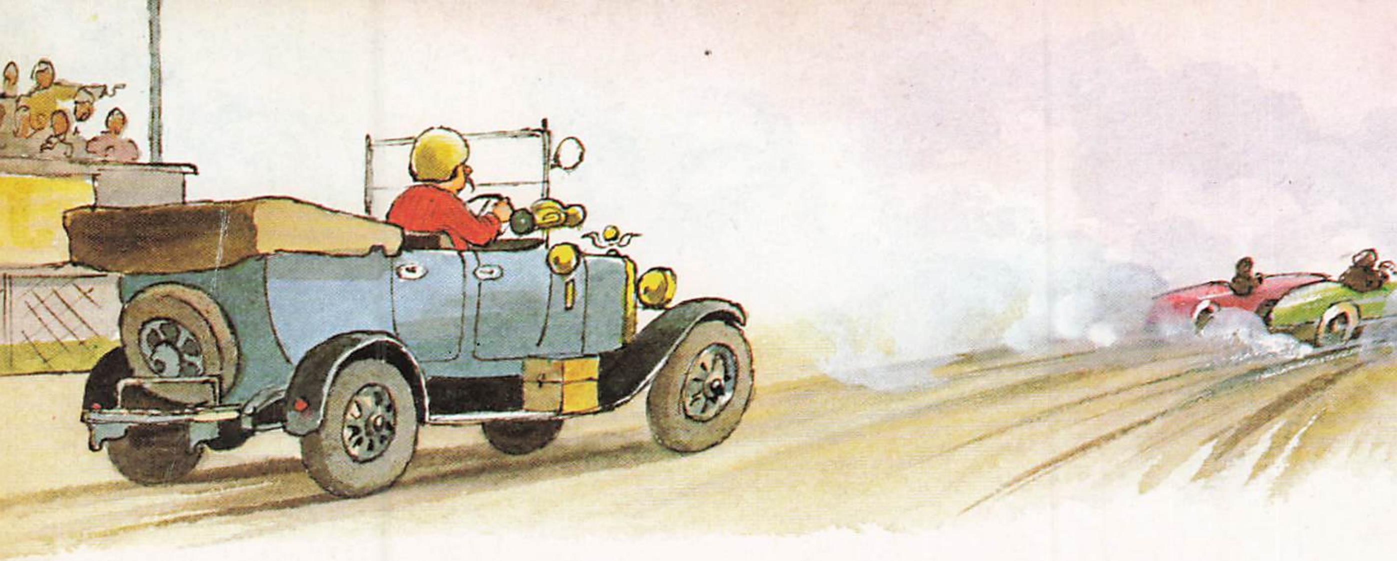


And that's exactly what they did. There stood Gumdrop on the starting grid among the fastest and most powerful vintage cars that had ever assembled for such a race. The other drivers looked slightly askance wondering how such a slow and lumbering old car as Gumdrop had the cheek to enter the race against their own thundering machines, but Mr Oldcastle – crash-helmeted and ready – merely thought: 'I'll show them!'



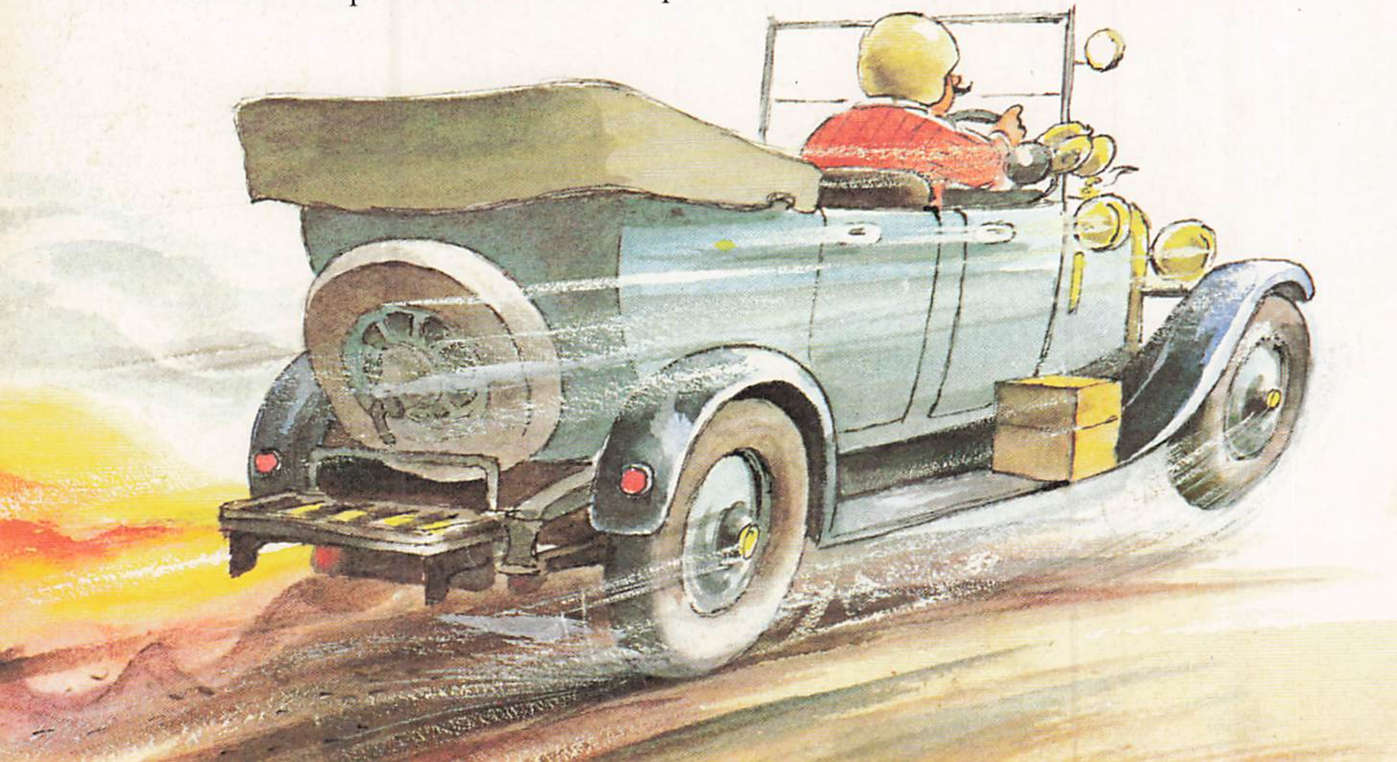


Horace was a little alarmed but he felt safe enough hidden under the carpet in the back. The flag went up, a horn sounded – and they were OFF.

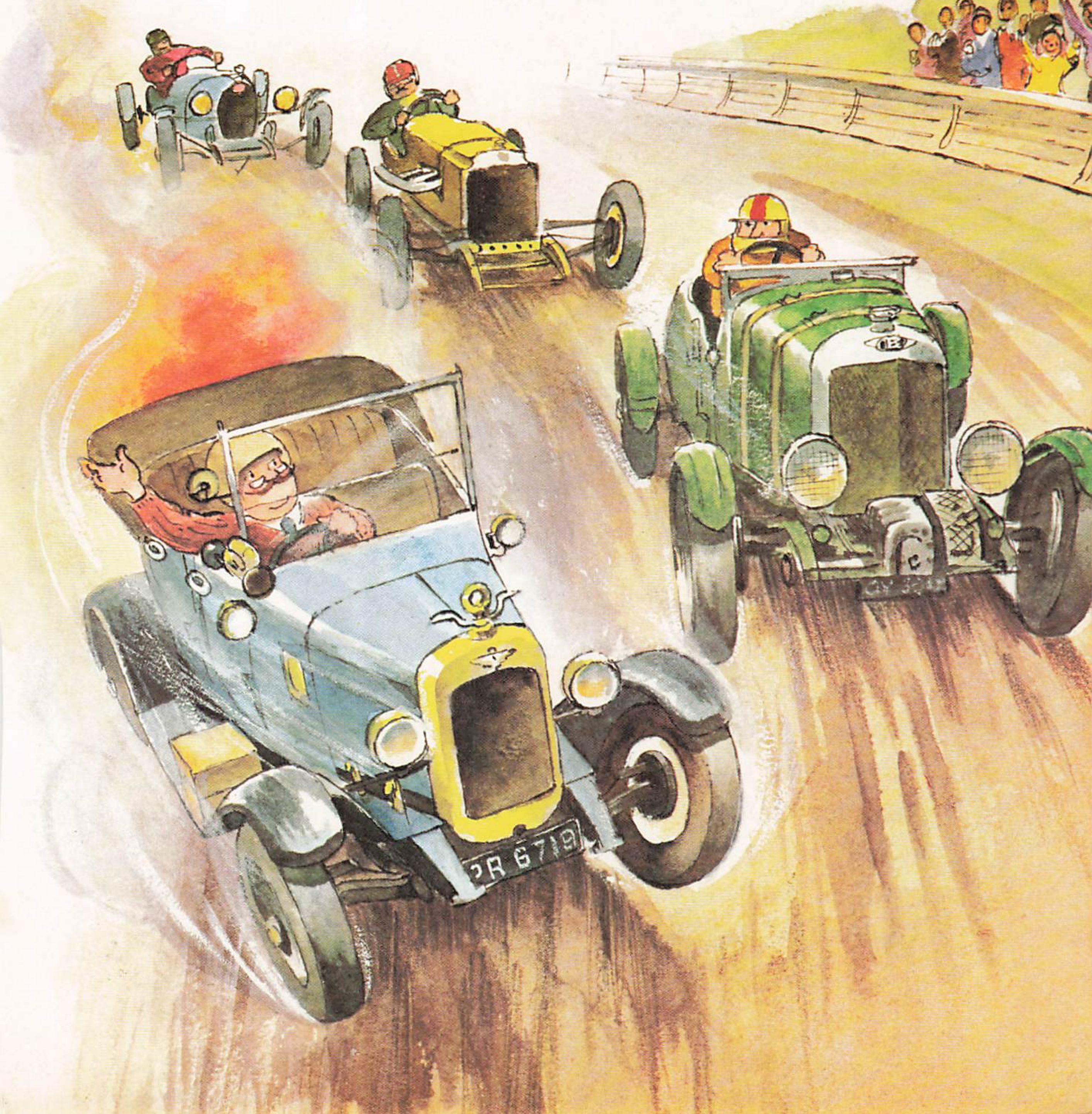


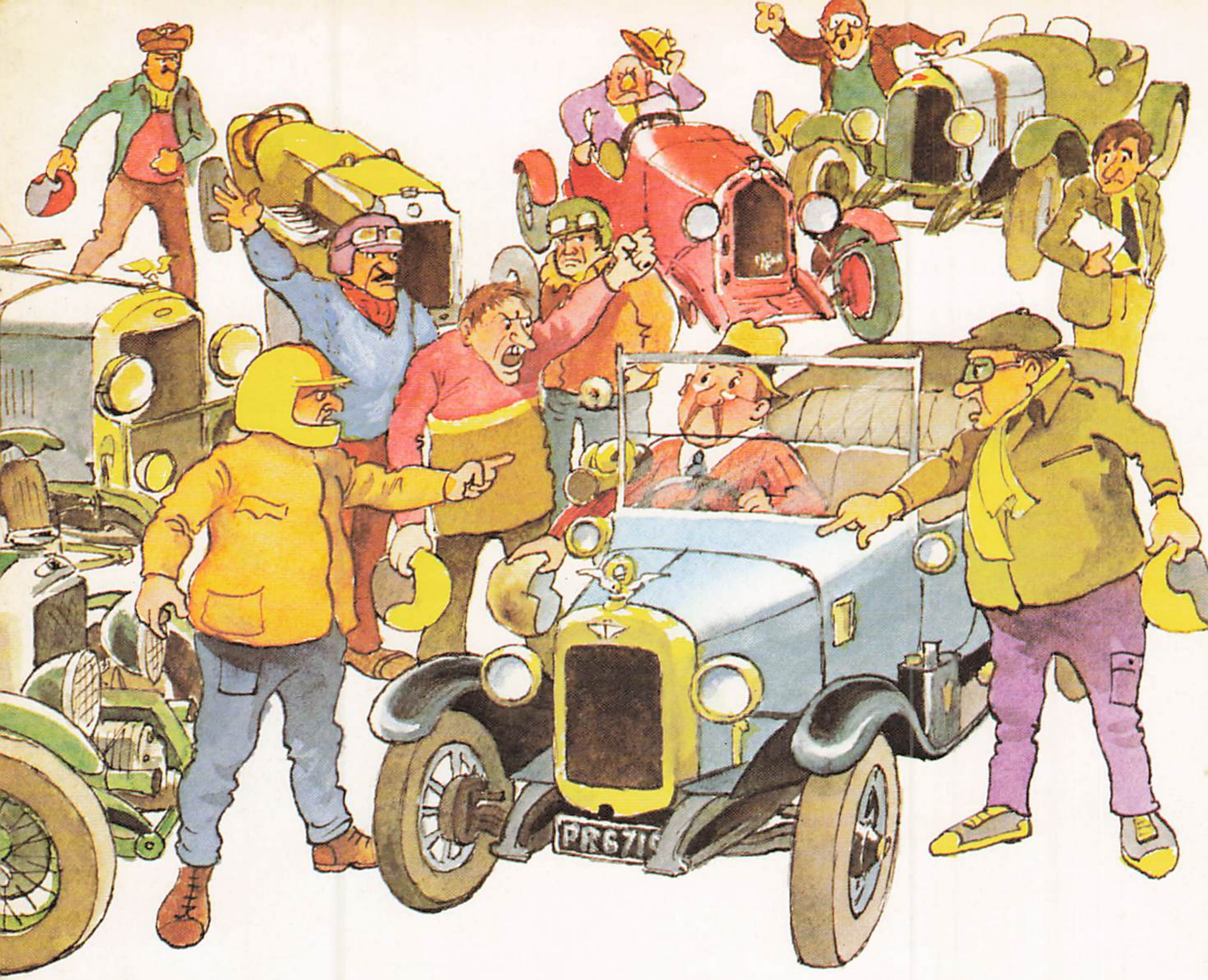
With screaming engines the other cars thundered away in a cloud of smoke. Gumdrop was much slower. In fact by the time he was in top gear the other cars had long since disappeared round the bend.

So now was the time to act. Mr Oldcastle pulled out the secret POTBARC switch and put his foot down. Gumdrop gave a shudder, his engine began to roar like a jumbo-jet, a stream of flaming smoke issued from his exhaust pipe and he leapt forward like a space-rocket!



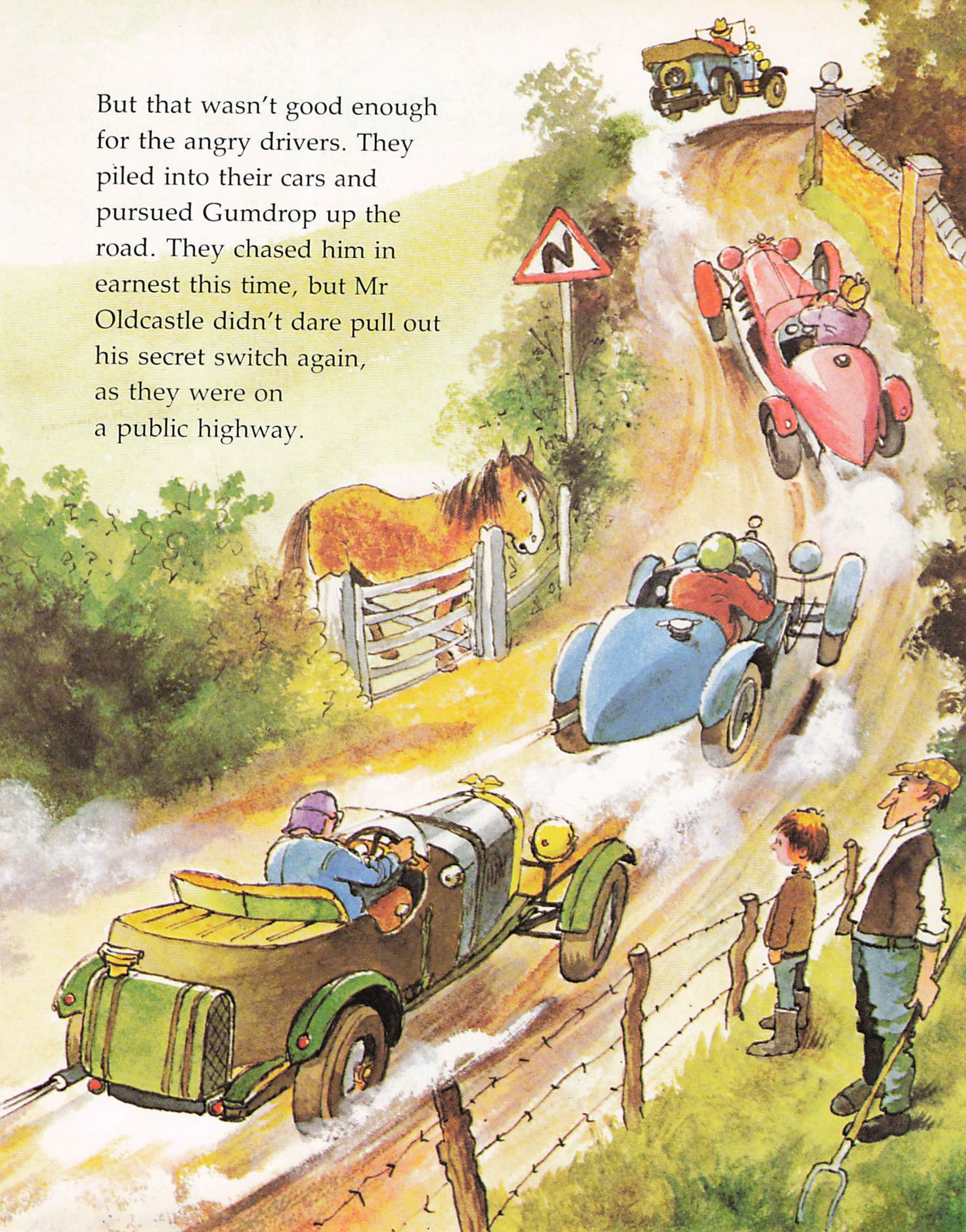
He caught up with the other cars in a flash and overtook them all. With a cheerful wave at the leading driver Mr Oldcastle scorched past and disappeared round the bend. He won the race by six clear laps!



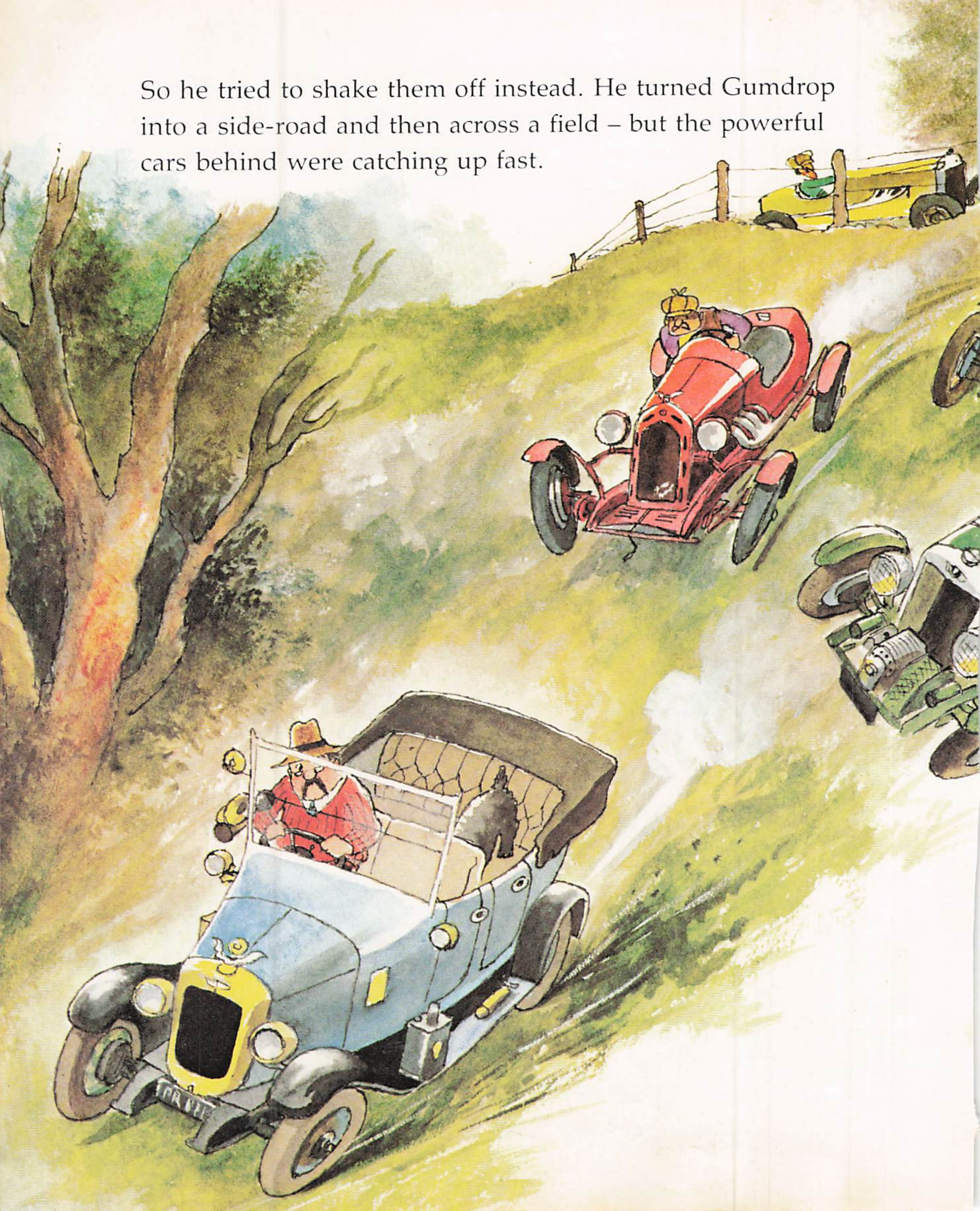


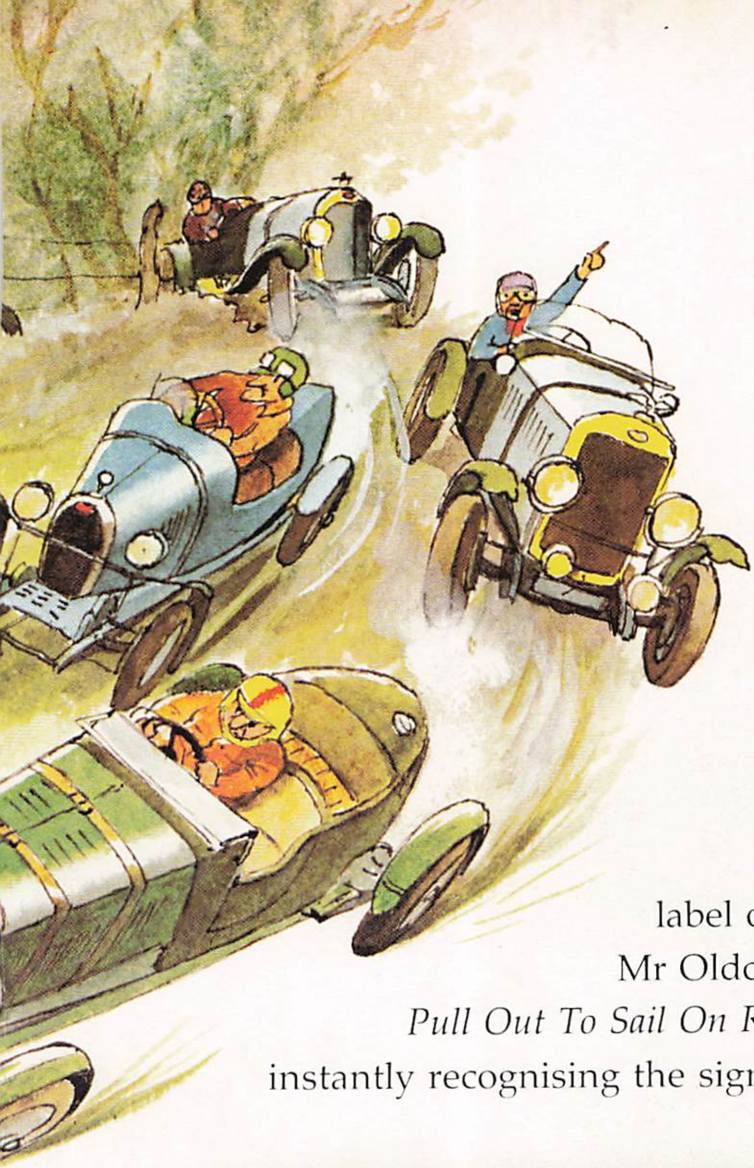
The crowds cheered Gumdrop for his wonderful victory, but the other drivers were very angry indeed. 'Impossible!' cried one. 'Gumdrop's a fraud!' cried another. 'Oldcastle's a cheat!' cried a third. 'A disgrace to the Club!' they all cried. Mr Oldcastle didn't wait to hear any more because he felt rather guilty himself about the secret switch. So he put Gumdrop in gear and drove away hoping that he wouldn't be missed.

But that wasn't good enough for the angry drivers. They piled into their cars and pursued Gumdrop up the road. They chased him in earnest this time, but Mr Oldcastle didn't dare pull out his secret switch again, as they were on a public highway.



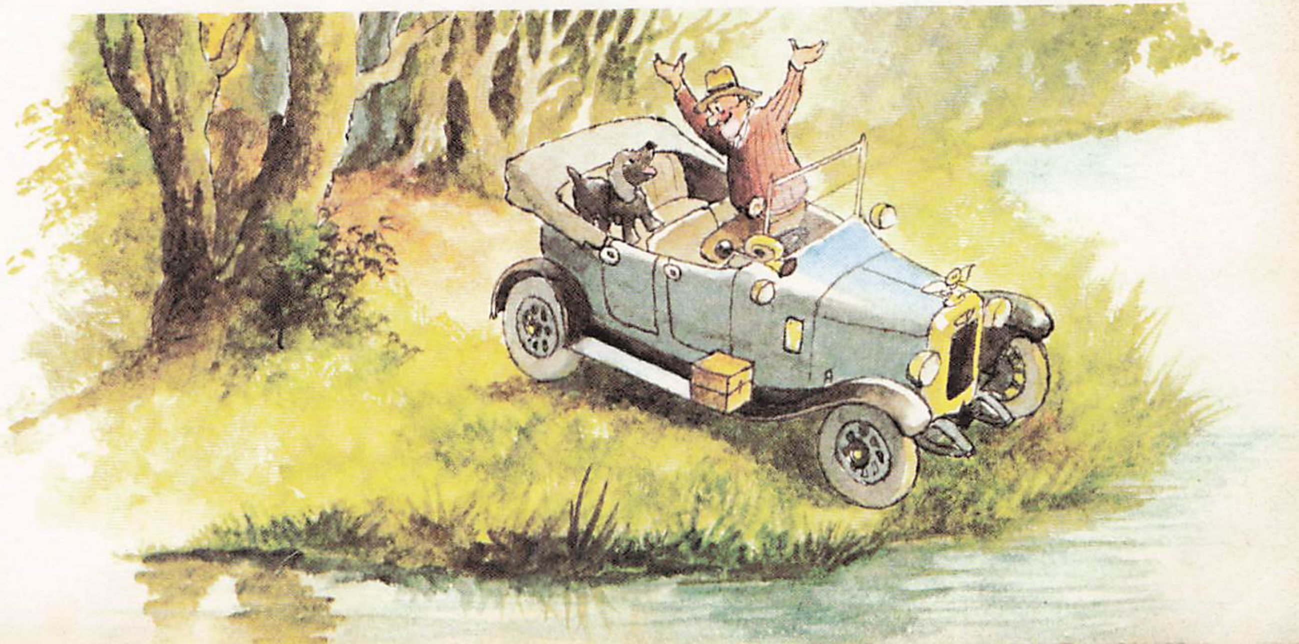
So he tried to shake them off instead. He turned Gumdrop into a side-road and then across a field – but the powerful cars behind were catching up fast.





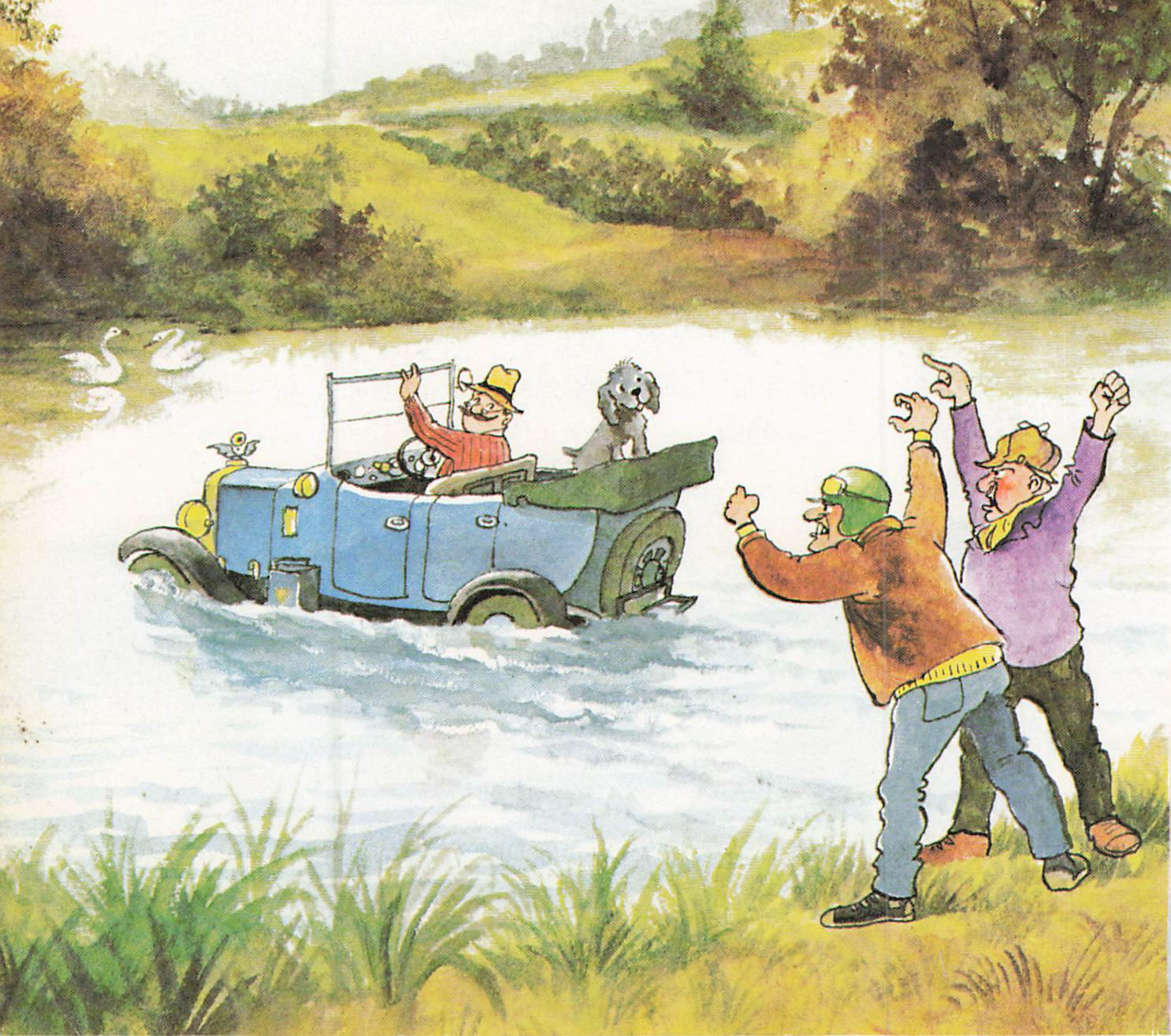
As Gumdrop raced down a narrow lane he came to a river. And there was no bridge across it. 'We shall be caught!' cried Mr Oldcastle in alarm – but Horace began to bark excitedly again from the back.

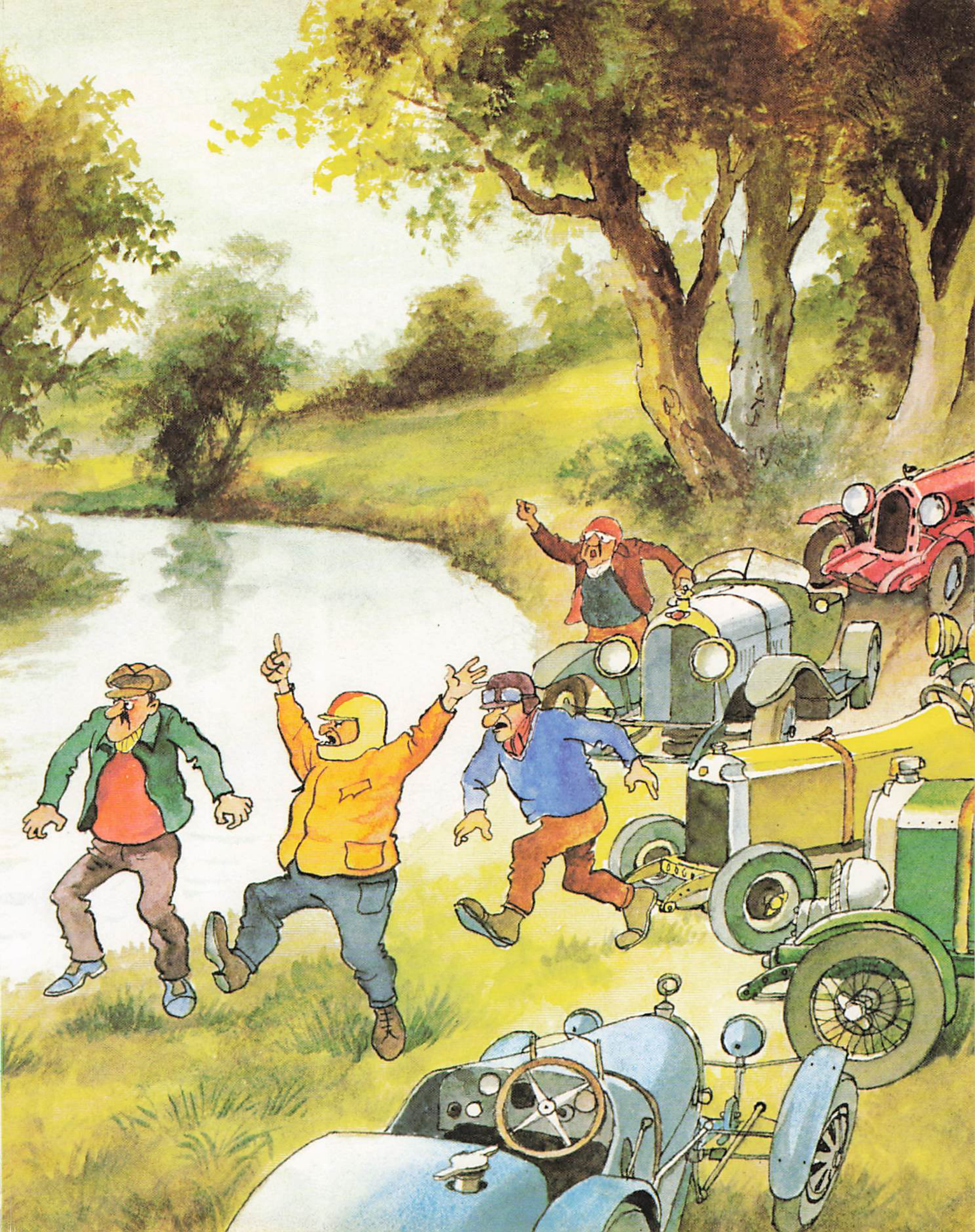
He was barking at yet another secret switch! He had found it under the carpet and under the floorboards, and it had a label on it which said: POTSORAC. Mr Oldcastle was delighted. 'It means *Pull Out To Sail On Rivers And Canals*!' he shouted, instantly recognising the significance of that strange word.



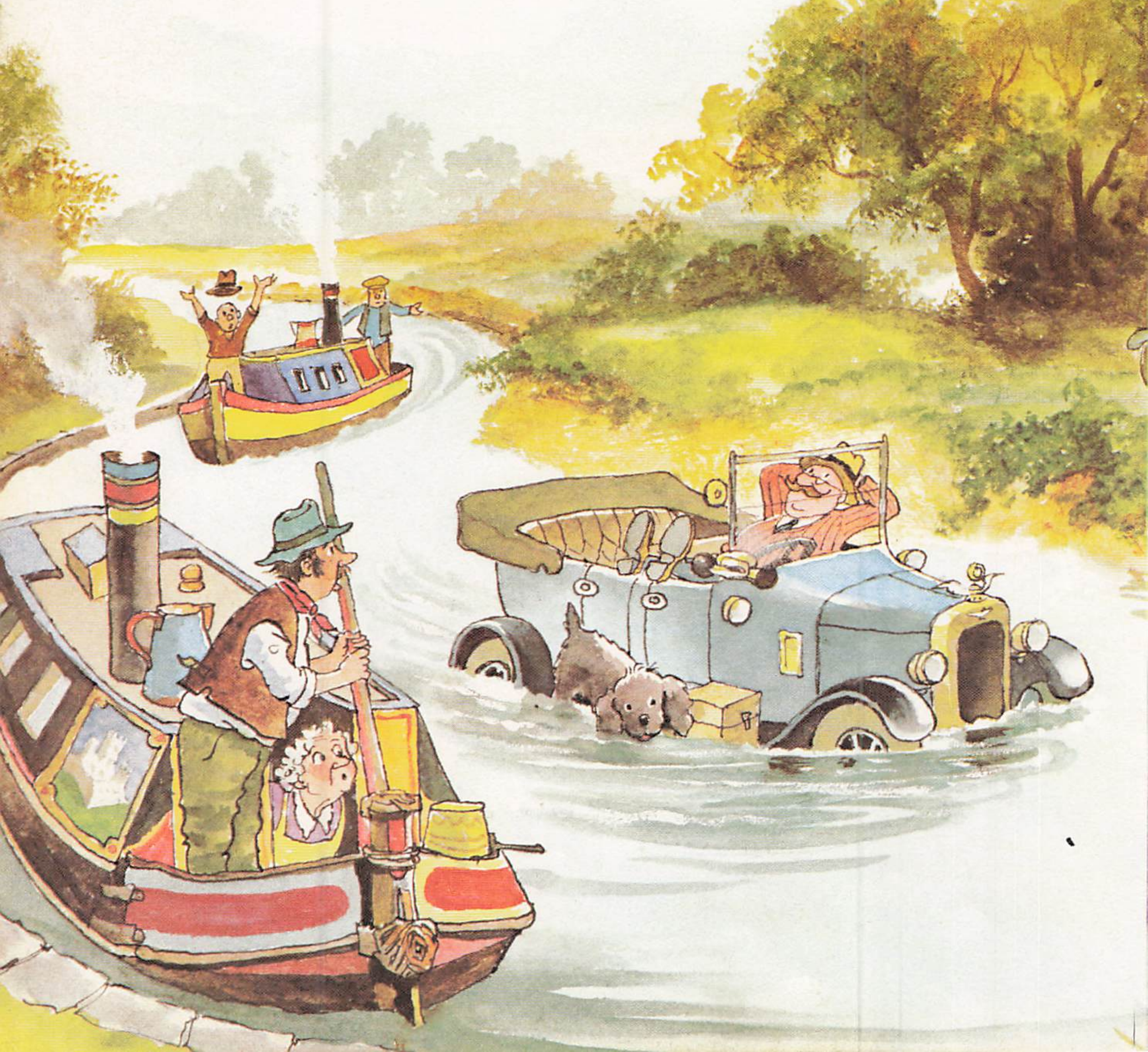
But he had no time to reflect how this amazing second secret switch could have got there because Horace had already pulled it out and Gumdrop was rolling down towards the water – and just as the angry cars appeared he splashed into the river and sailed away!

Mr Oldcastle gave a cheerful wave to the furious drivers who were left standing on the shore.

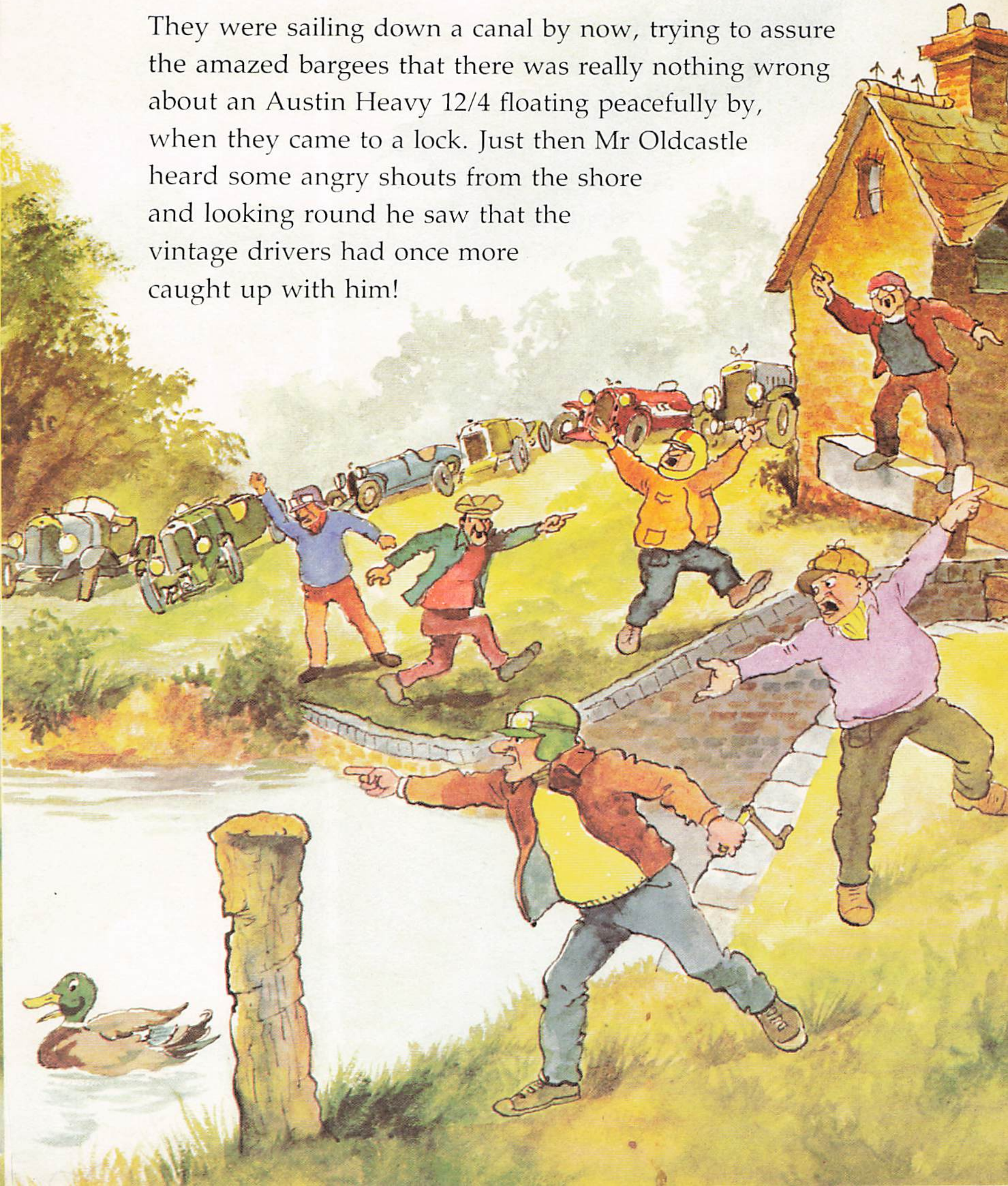




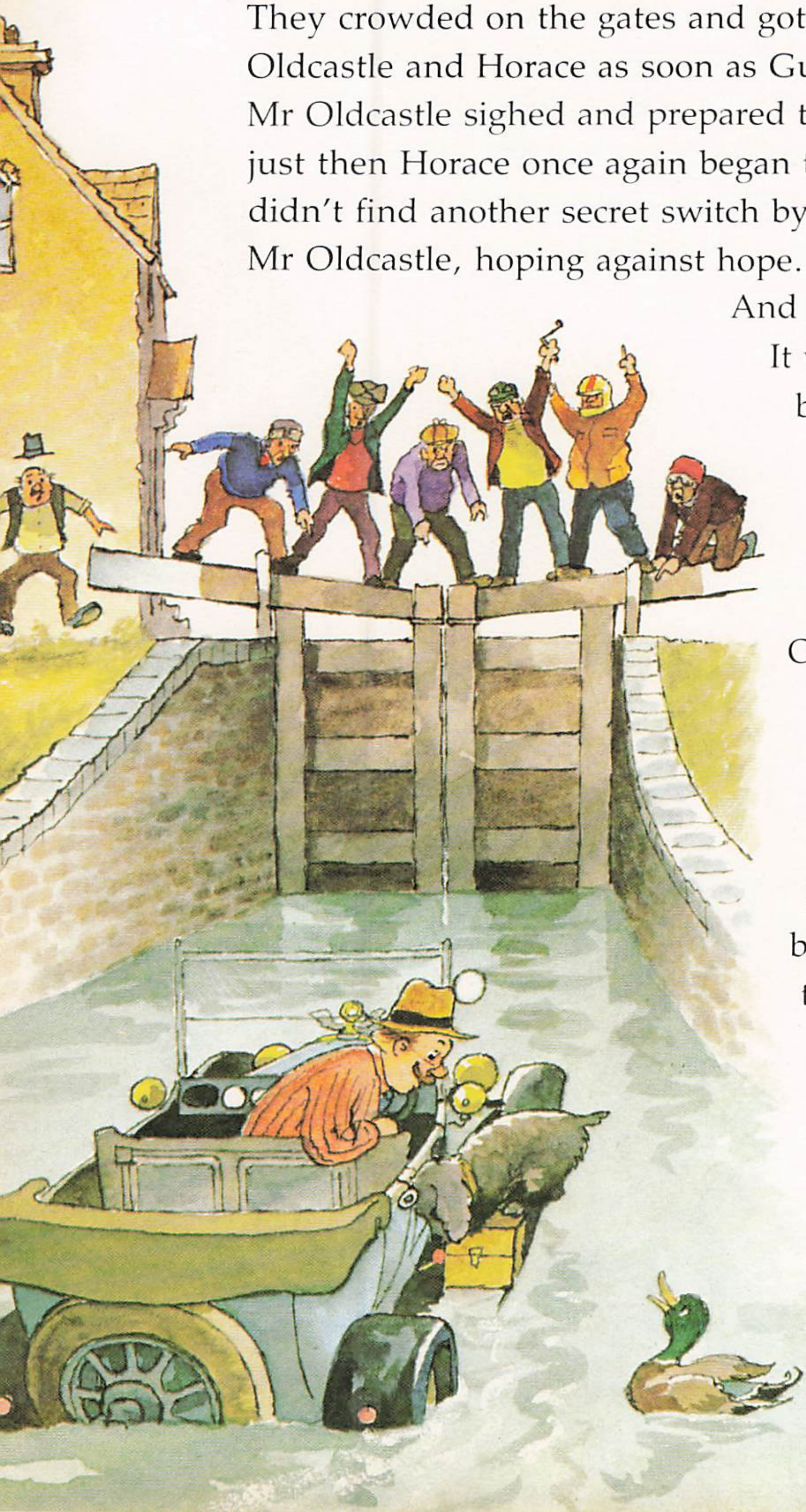
Gumdrop sailed on with his engine chugging away like a motor-boat and his big wheels keeping him safely afloat. 'This is the life!' said Mr Oldcastle contentedly as he relaxed after all the excitement. Horace, too, was enjoying himself on the running-board, trying to catch a fish or two for his lunch.



They were sailing down a canal by now, trying to assure the amazed bargees that there was really nothing wrong about an Austin Heavy 12/4 floating peacefully by, when they came to a lock. Just then Mr Oldcastle heard some angry shouts from the shore and looking round he saw that the vintage drivers had once more caught up with him!

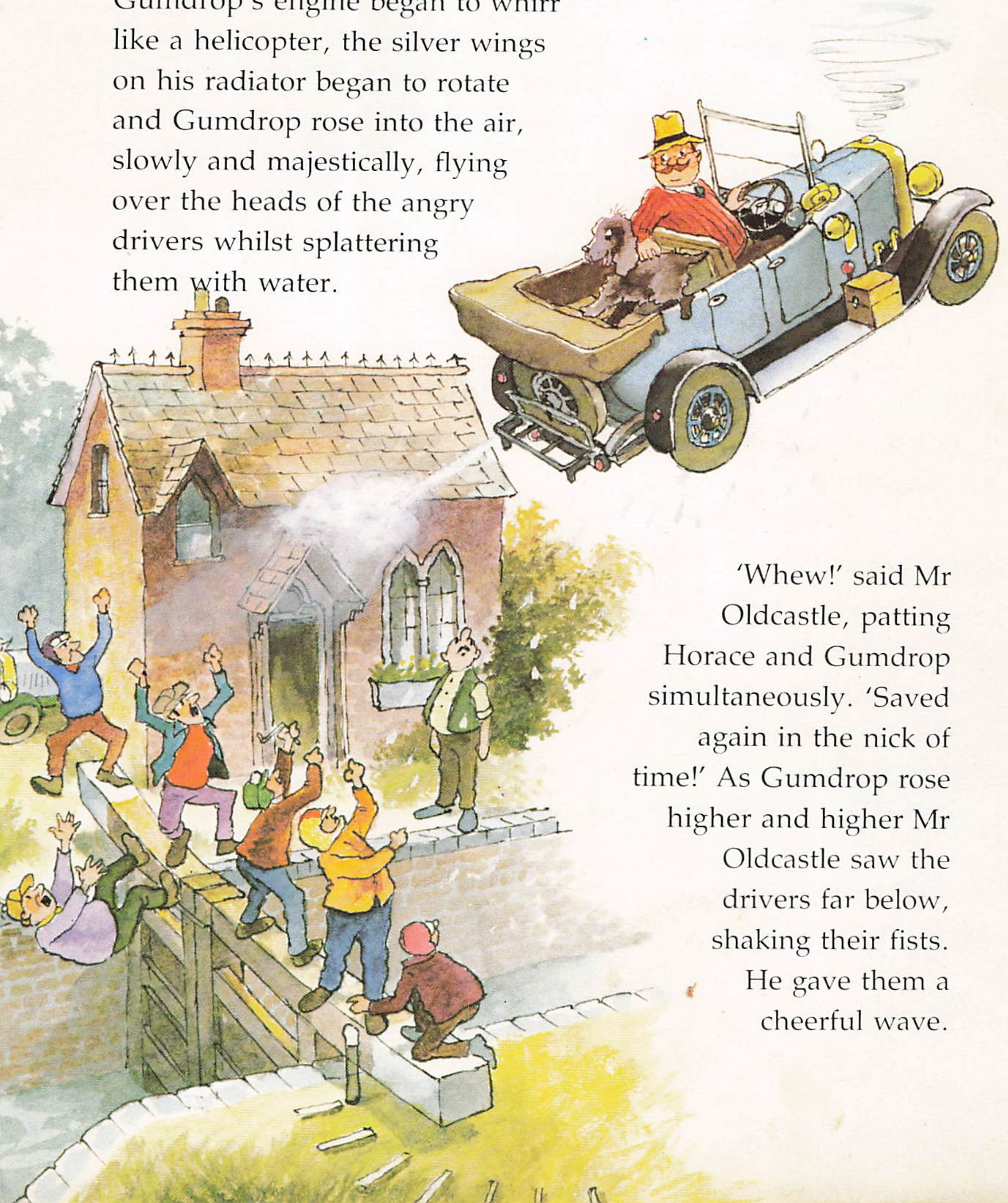


They crowded on the gates and got ready to catch Mr Oldcastle and Horace as soon as Gumdrop reached them. Mr Oldcastle sighed and prepared to meet his deserts, but just then Horace once again began to bark excitedly. 'You didn't find another secret switch by any chance?' asked Mr Oldcastle, hoping against hope.



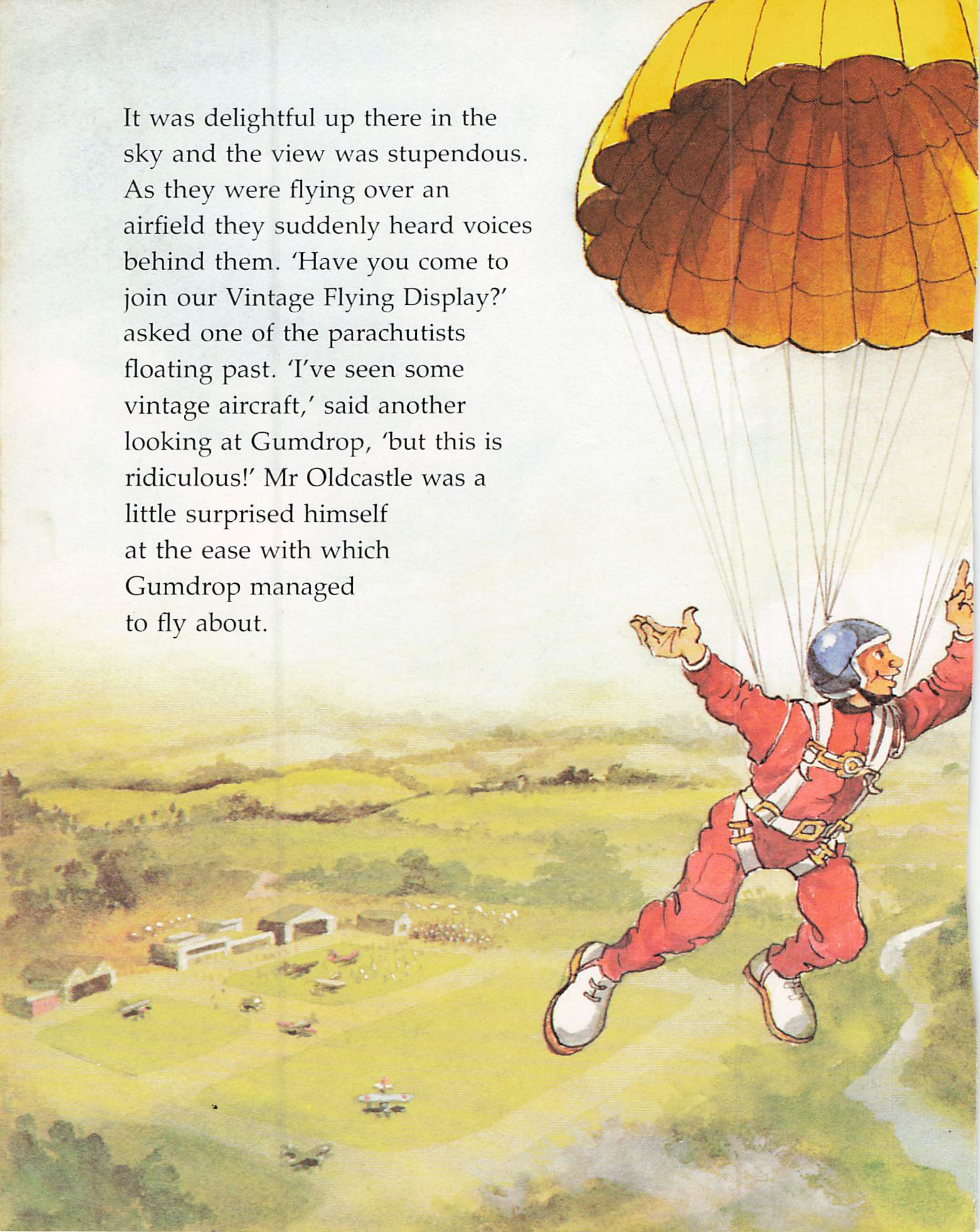
And yes, he *had* found one! It was hidden behind the battery on the running-board and its label proudly announced: POTFLAB! 'You clever hound!' shouted Mr Oldcastle in great relief. He had stopped wondering about all these secret switches suddenly sprouting from his trusty old car because the meaning of this label was perfectly clear: *Pull Out To Fly Like A Bird!* Exactly what was required!

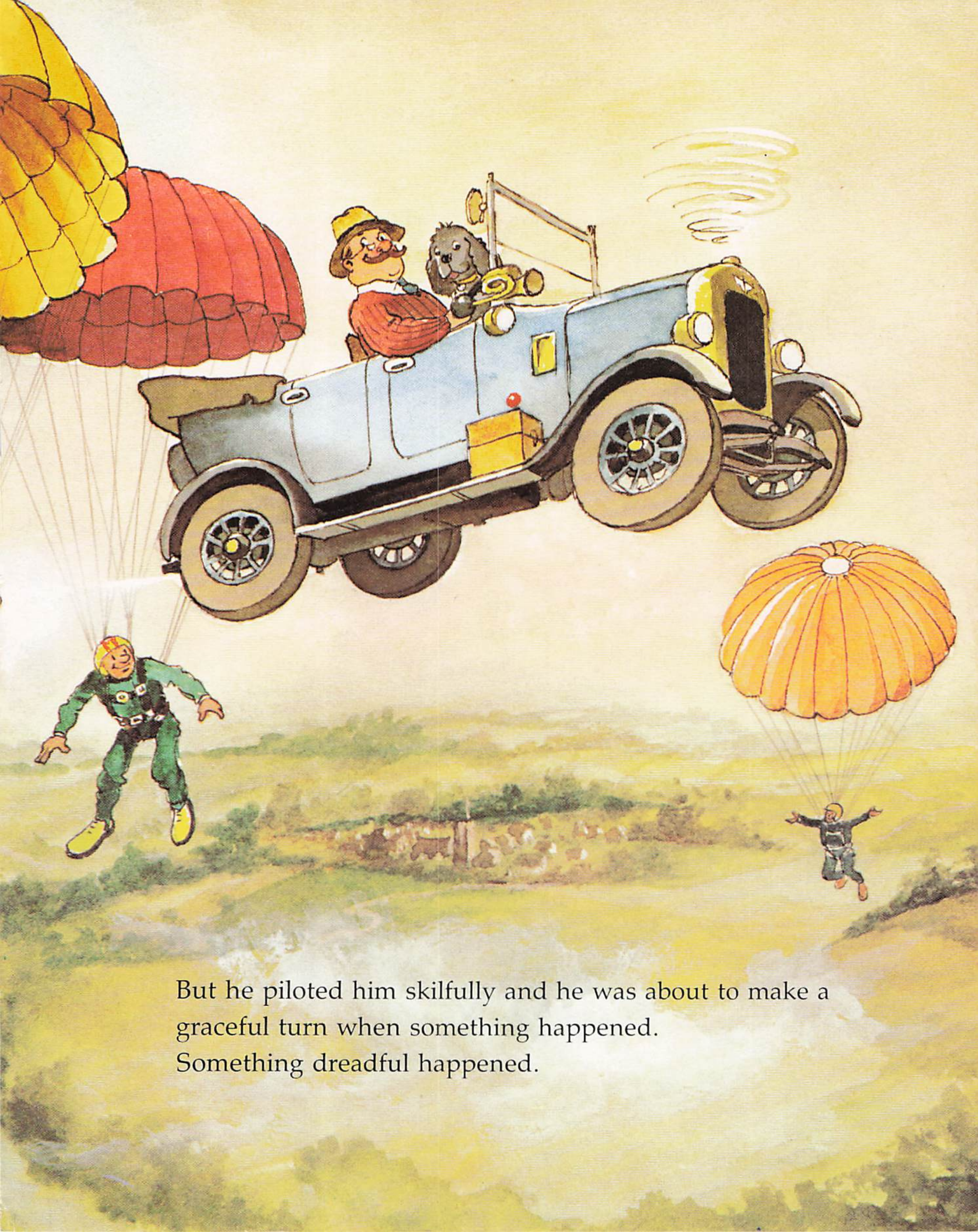
And as Horace duly pulled it out, Gumdrop's engine began to whirr like a helicopter, the silver wings on his radiator began to rotate and Gumdrop rose into the air, slowly and majestically, flying over the heads of the angry drivers whilst splattering them with water.



'Whew!' said Mr Oldcastle, patting Horace and Gumdrop simultaneously. 'Saved again in the nick of time!' As Gumdrop rose higher and higher Mr Oldcastle saw the drivers far below, shaking their fists. He gave them a cheerful wave.

It was delightful up there in the sky and the view was stupendous. As they were flying over an airfield they suddenly heard voices behind them. 'Have you come to join our Vintage Flying Display?' asked one of the parachutists floating past. 'I've seen some vintage aircraft,' said another looking at Gumdrop, 'but this is ridiculous!' Mr Oldcastle was a little surprised himself at the ease with which Gumdrop managed to fly about.

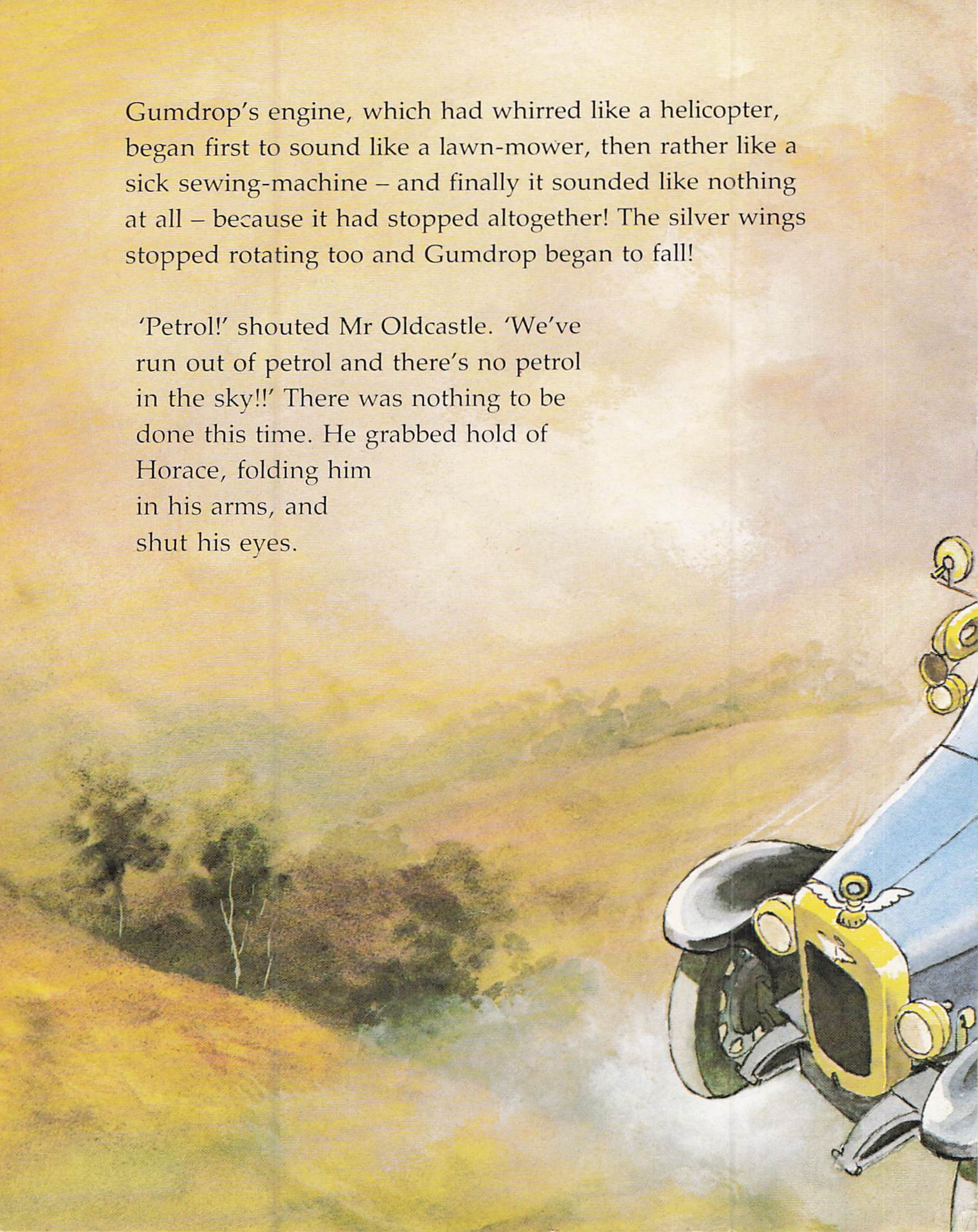


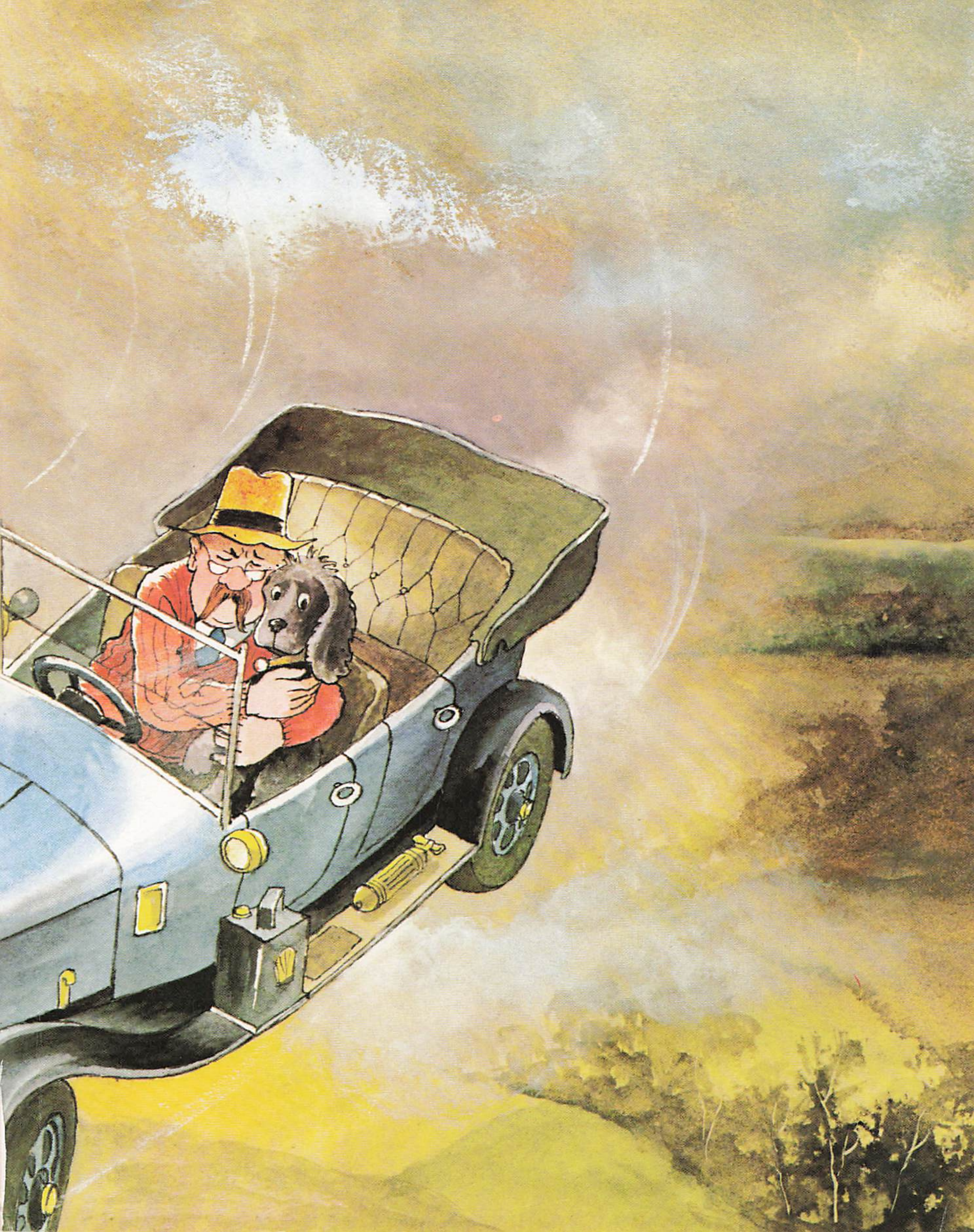


But he piloted him skilfully and he was about to make a graceful turn when something happened.
Something dreadful happened.

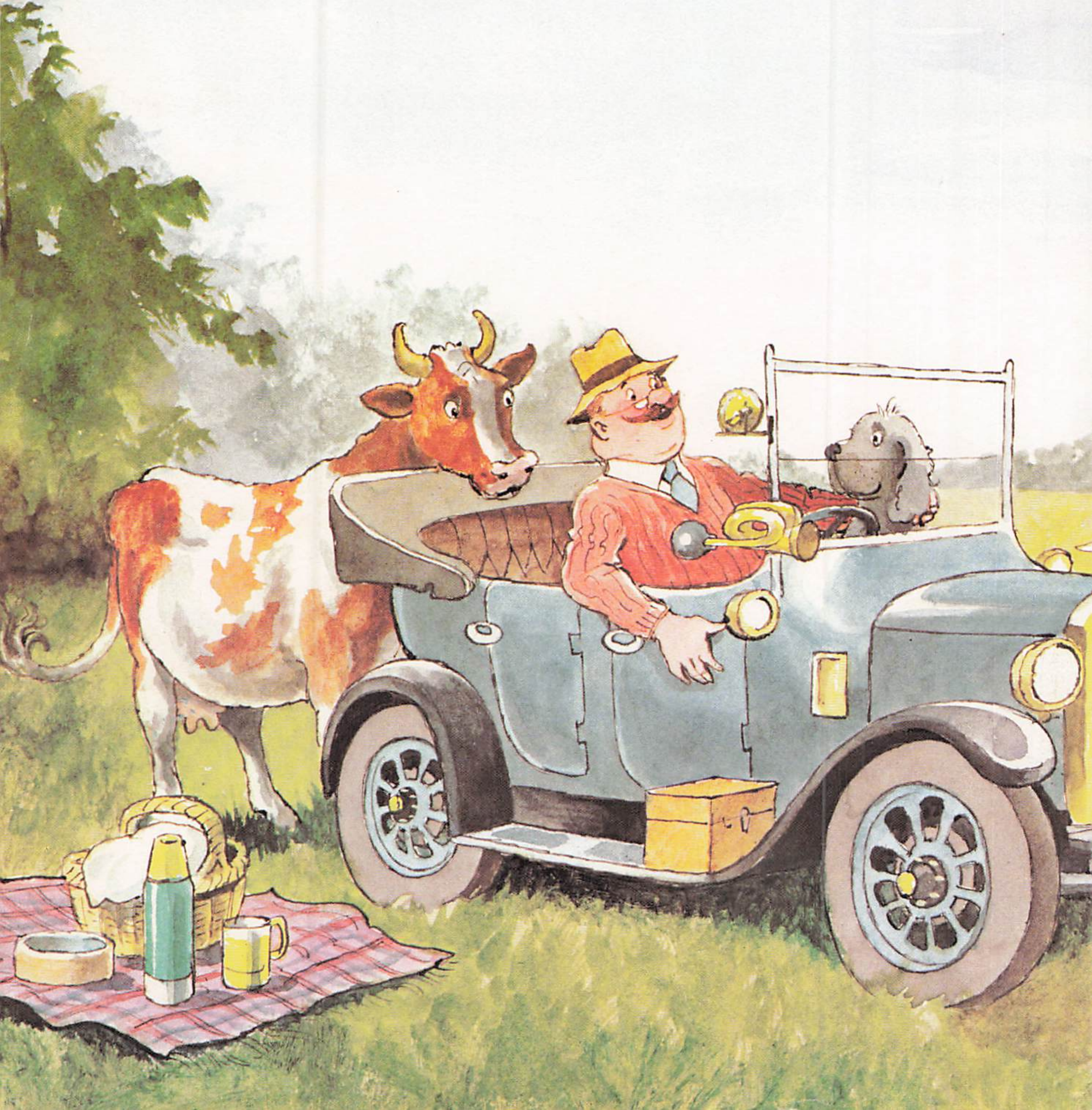
Gumdrop's engine, which had whirred like a helicopter, began first to sound like a lawn-mower, then rather like a sick sewing-machine – and finally it sounded like nothing at all – because it had stopped altogether! The silver wings stopped rotating too and Gumdrop began to fall!

'Petrol!' shouted Mr Oldcastle. 'We've run out of petrol and there's no petrol in the sky!!' There was nothing to be done this time. He grabbed hold of Horace, folding him in his arms, and shut his eyes.

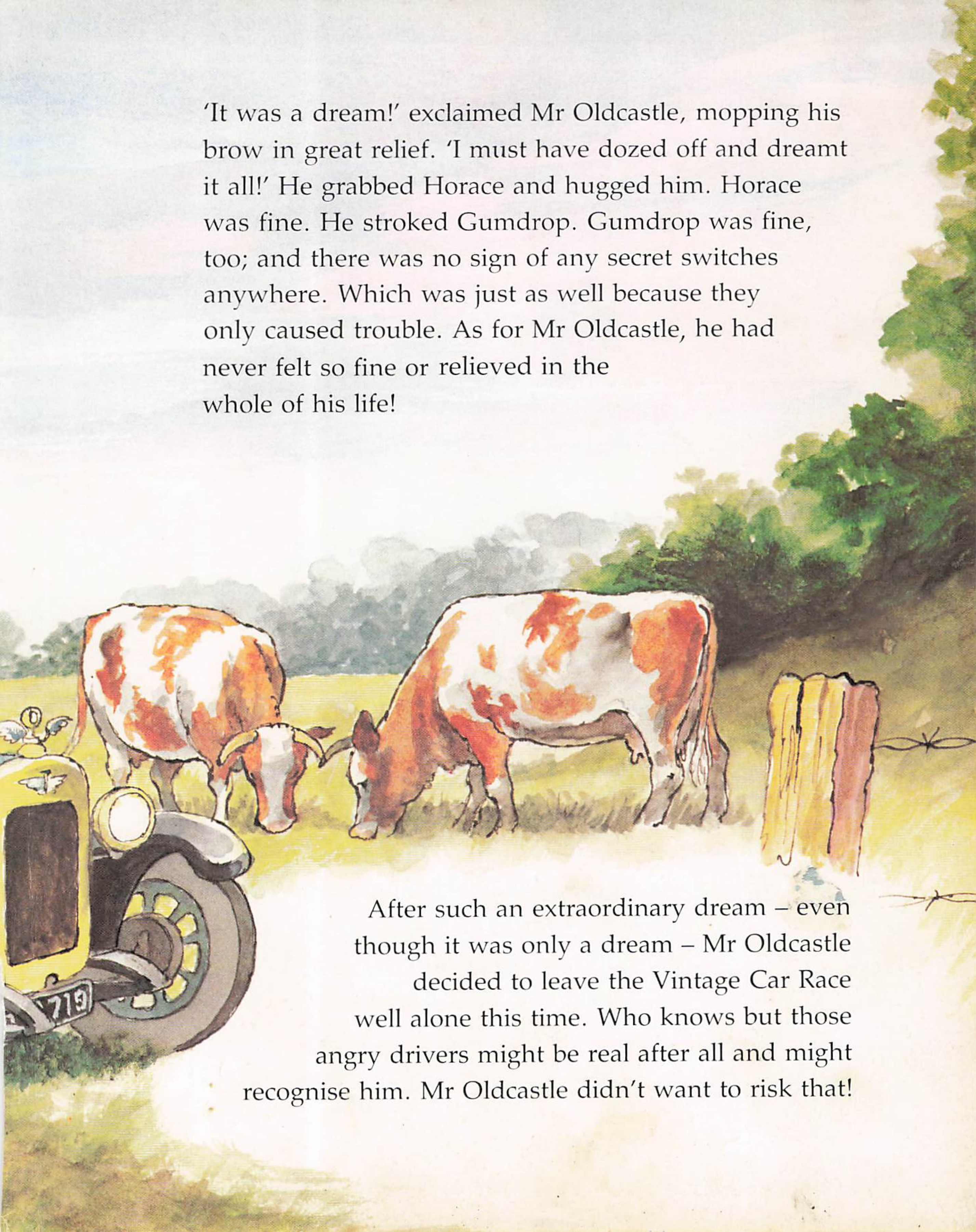




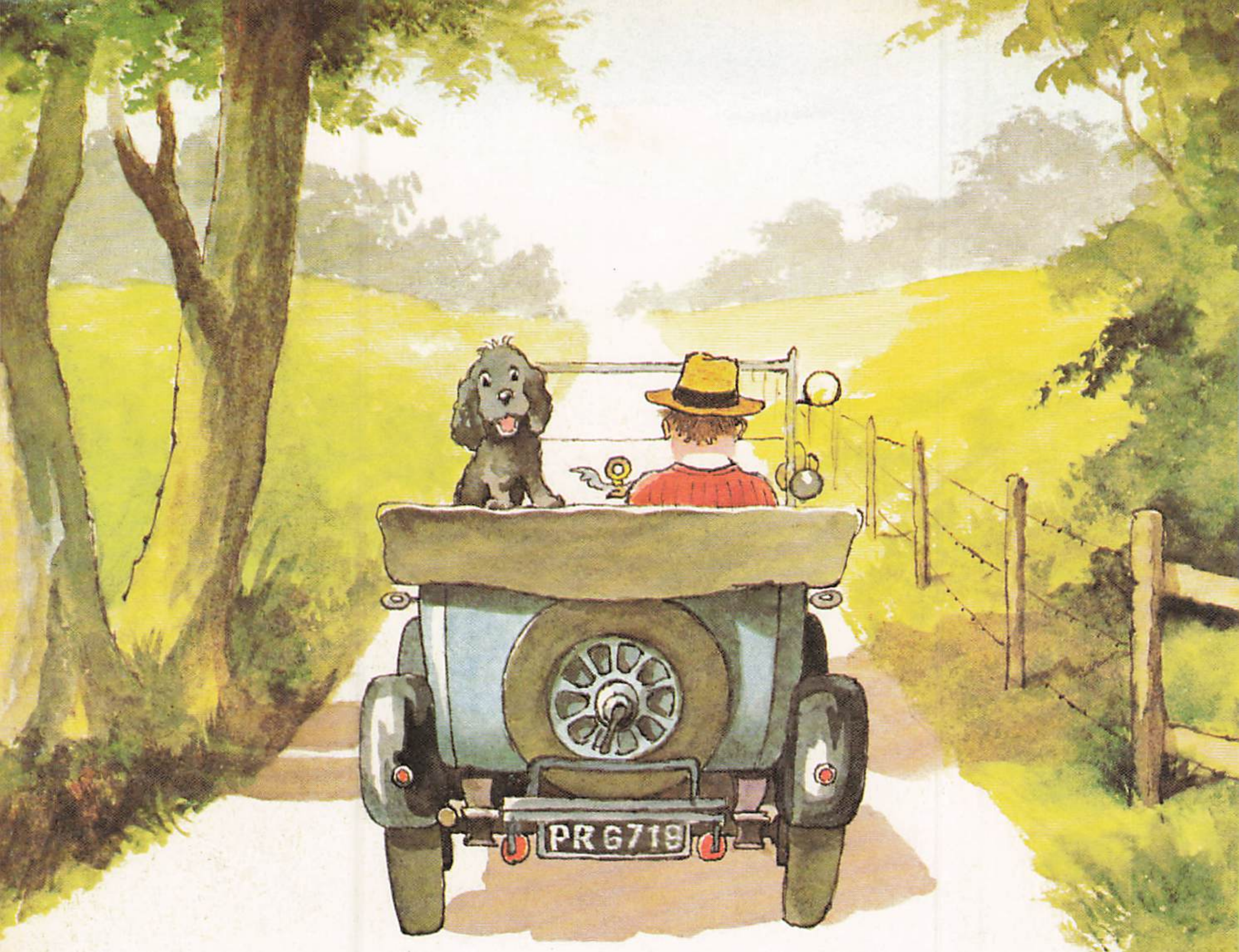
When he opened them again he found himself sitting in the driving seat with Horace beside him. Gumdrop was still in the peaceful meadow among the grazing cows under the hot sun. Just as before . . .



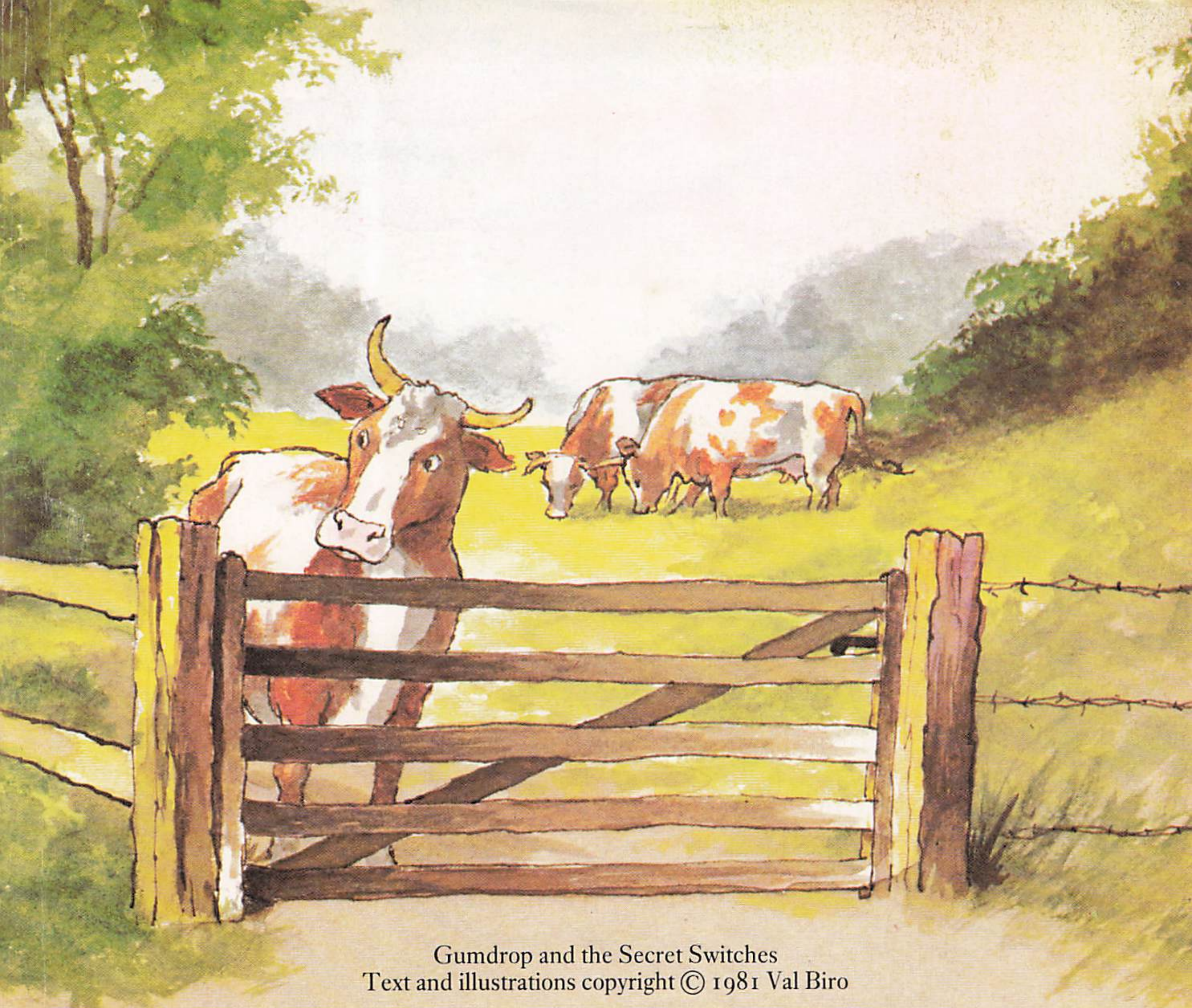
'It was a dream!' exclaimed Mr Oldcastle, mopping his brow in great relief. 'I must have dozed off and dreamt it all!' He grabbed Horace and hugged him. Horace was fine. He stroked Gumdrop. Gumdrop was fine, too; and there was no sign of any secret switches anywhere. Which was just as well because they only caused trouble. As for Mr Oldcastle, he had never felt so fine or relieved in the whole of his life!



After such an extraordinary dream – even though it was only a dream – Mr Oldcastle decided to leave the Vintage Car Race well alone this time. Who knows but those angry drivers might be real after all and might recognise him. Mr Oldcastle didn't want to risk that!



So they turned back for home. Gumdrop's engine sounded once again like a well-oiled Austin Heavy 12/4 engine should sound: slow but sure. It sounded as if to say that switching to racing and sailing was not for him. And as for flying – Gumdrop was well content to remain firmly on the ground.



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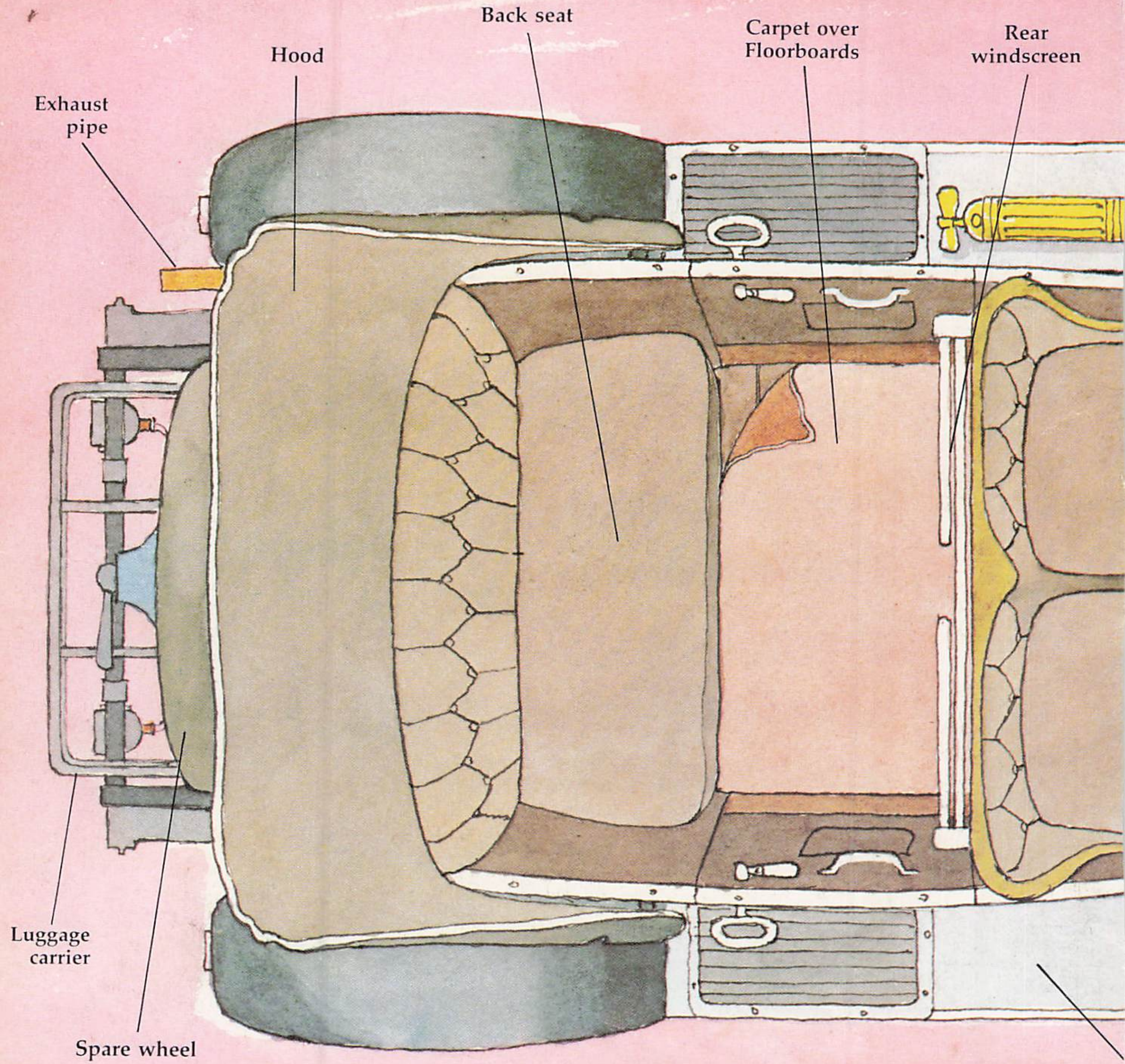
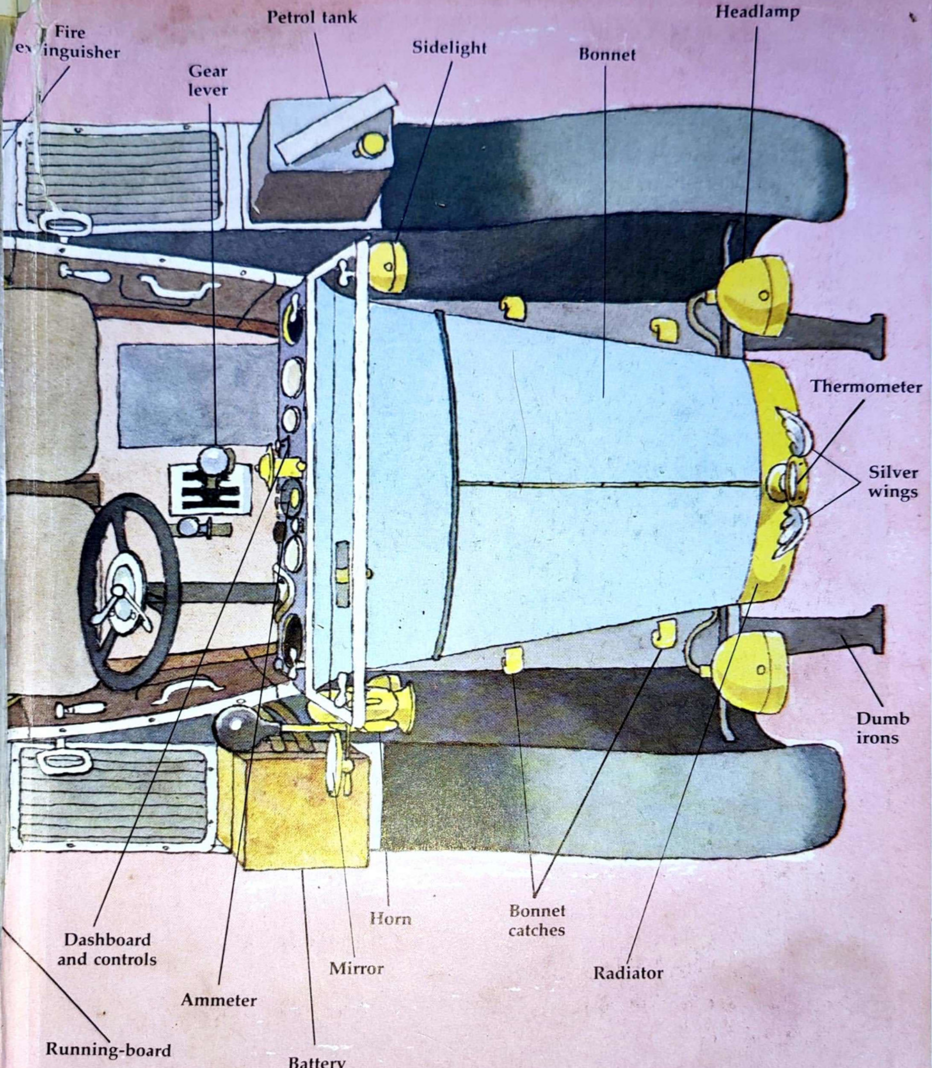

Back seat
Hood
Carpet over Floorboards
Rear windscreen
Exhaust pipe
Luggage carrier
Spare wheel

This is a bird's eye view of GUMDROP. He is an Austin Clifton Heavy 12/4, made in 1926. The plan shows every detail - except the secret switches!


Fire extinguisher
Gear lever
Petrol tank
Sidelight
Bonnet
Headlamp
Thermometer
Silver wings
Dumb irons
Dashboard and controls
Ammeter
Running-board
Battery
Mirror
Horn
Bonnet catches
Radiator

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